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East India Examiner. Re-  
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THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

REPRINTED

From the ORIGINAL PAPERS of  
That Periodical Publication.



L O N D O N :

Printed for W. NICOLL, in St. Paul's Church-Yard.

M D C C L X V I.

THE

EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

REPRINTED

FROM THE ORIGINAL PAPERS OF

THE PERIODICAL PUBLICATION.



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EAST INDIA COMPANY  
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LONDON

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MDCCCXXXV

ADVERTISEMENT.

IT became necessary to publish a new Edition of the *East India Examiners*, and it was thought convenient to give the whole eleven Numbers in a small Pamphlet, that the Public might have before them, in one point of view, every thing that has been wrote under that title. There are no alterations from the original papers, more than a few literal corrections, except in Number II. where five letters of Correspondents are left out, as no ways essential in the main design of the *Examiner*, and which at the time did not seem much relished by the Public.

THE *Examiner* will not on this occasion (as customary) boast of the favourable reception his labours have met with. Whoever has attended to the irregular times of publication, and careless manner of announcing it to the world, will see that no interested or pecuniary advantage could be the object of his writing. He has also shown himself un-

# iv ADVERTISEMENT.

attached to any party in India politicks, and that to instruct his fellow proprietors, and to establish true notions of the Company's affairs, are what all his endeavours point at.

IT would argue the height of vanity to ascribe all the knowledge of India and its commerce, which is to be found in these Numbers, to the capacity of one man. The *India Examiner* has had helps of the best kind, and a communication of facts so full and exact, that the Directors themselves, if they were even willing, could hardly give the like. On the whole, this collection, we venture to say, exhibits to the world a more compleat and distinct state of India affairs than any hitherto published; and we doubt not, will be quoted for some time to come as the true and genuine state of the East India Company in the year 1766.

THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

NUMBER I.

SATURDAY, *September 6*, 1766.

THE commerce of Great Britain with China and the Indies, as carried on by the Company, becomes every day a more interesting object of public concern. In former times, when their stock was small and of little value, their trade confined, and their possessions nothing, it was viewed altogether in the light of a private adventure, by which the merchants concerned might either gain or lose, without immediately affecting the nation; but at present as there are near seven millions of property invested in that trade, an immense quantity of shipping employed, fleets and armies maintained, and great possessions acquired; every man almost in these kingdoms finds himself affected by its prosperity. By relation, by connection, and by a thousand other combinations of interest, we are all more or less concerned; and the East India affairs, next



to the constitution of England itself, ought to be the subject of our most serious attention.

It is therefore surprizing that the good people of England, who are so extremely watchful over the conduct of their ministers, should be so negligent with regard to their East India Directors. In matters of state, every private man thinks he has a right to advise, and not a cobbler but will lift up his awl against the minister, and say, What doest thou? This liberty may be pushed to ridicule, but never to hurt. A good minister will never be afraid to have his actions scan'd, but the proudest Vizier that ever ruled, will tremble at the Vox Populi, when raised against him upon good ground.

THE present Directors of the East India Company are the only set of men in power, who have been able hitherto to stifle the voice of the people, when justly raised against them upon account of their mismanagement. While they, by unfair concealment of the real advantages obtained for the Company, and by artful workings on the fears of individuals, hoped to have succeeded in sinking the actual value of stock, and lowering it in expectation, the injured proprietors have been precluded from all appeal to the public, through the channel of the daily papers. I shall not pronounce whether



the publishers have been gained by the Directors; but it is certain, that most letters upon that subject have been refused at the different *papers*, upon frivolous pretences, or thrown mangled and disfigured into some bye corner.

To remedy that abuse, and to secure a ready communication with the public, this paper is undertaken: We propose standing up the champions of Truth and the Proprietors, against falsehood, injustice and the Directors; we will *examine* their conduct, detect their intrigues, and expose their weakness. We will endeavour, from uncontroverted facts and plain deductions, to ascertain the real value of stock, that the Proprietors may no longer be the dupes of designing men, and of Change Alley jobs.

THE East India Company is composed of various sets of mankind. Besides the great and opulent, there are the industrious tradesman, who lodges the fruits of his labours in that fund as in a place of security; the stockholder, whose subsistence depends altogether upon his yearly dividend; and the widow and the orphan, whose capitals are placed untransferable, in India Stock.

It happens most unluckily, that these three last orders, whose welfare depends most upon the success and management of the Company's affairs, are at the same time most

exposed to the misconduct and sinister designs of a weak or wicked direction. When things go wrong, the great and rich soon slip their neck out of the collar; but the honest tradesman, whose occupations turn his attention another way, may be ruined before he is aware. Those who live solely on the revenues arising from their dividend, reside generally at too great a distance to be well informed; and the widow and orphan, helpless and innocent, are sure to be the sufferers.

It becomes then an obligation of honour, of justice, for every Proprietor to communicate his lights to his fellow adventurers, to warn them of danger when he discovers it, or put them on their guard against delusion, when he finds it attempted. This shall be our task, and we invite every man who has the welfare of the Company at heart to assist us by his advice and correspondence. We affect not elegance of style, or correctness of composition, but will readily insert any letter with sentiments such as we approve, though couched in the plainest language. All East India intelligence, when it comes upon good authority, or from persons subscribing their names, shall also be inserted; that this paper may form a compleat representation of India affairs, as they really stand at this time.

It

IT gives us sensible pleasure to declare to our fellow Proprietors, that while we find fault with the management at home, we cannot but approve of the situation of the Company's affairs abroad. Our many and solid advantages in commerce, lately obtained and secured, put us beyond all possibility of danger; and nothing but the most infamous intrigue, and underhand jobbing, could have prevented the Proprietors from feeling already the effects of our successes in the advanced price of stock. Had the Directors, last general court, honestly declared a dividend of 10 per cent. which circumstances would have amply justified, those people who have been obliged to sell out, would have tasted at least in some measure of the Company's advantages; but how grating must it not be to see the friends of the Directors sole gainers, by what naturally tended to the good of the whole? Next year, when a much higher dividend will in all probability be declared, these gentlemen will triumph in the spoils of their brethren, and insult the easy credulity by which they profited.

THERE are, however, some wise men of old Proprietors, who will not suffer themselves to be thus deluded, and will not fail, on a proper occasion, to call those to account who have attempted to deceive them.

ONE cannot also behold without indignation, the late attempt on the rights of the Company, by a junto of self-erected negotiators, who dared to treat on their own authority, for the surrender of the property of their constituents; and that too with a *would-be* minister, who was as little authorized as themselves. This sham negotiation would only have excited laughter, had not the friends of these mock ambassadors seized the occasion, by spreading false alarms, to monopolize the stock to themselves, at an under value. Luckily, indeed, they were detected before their scheme could be accomplished; and the Proprietors, after a moment's reflection, discovered there could be no reason of alarm from the intentions of a ministry, in whom the nation have justly placed the highest confidence. The noble Lord, who is said to preside in all our national councils, and his friends whom he brought into administration with him, are declared enemies to injustice and oppression. They stood up last session, in a remarkable manner, in support of the liberty of commerce, and the rights of particular charters; and it is not to be supposed on this occasion, that they will sport with the property of so considerable a body, or tamper in private with self-sent deputies to betray their masters.

FROM

FROM the known character of the present administration, as well as from honour and justice, we may be assured whenever government resolves to interfere in the affairs of the East Indies, they will, by a plain, ingenuous, unequivocal declaration, let the Proprietors know what they are to expect, that they may not be left in prey to a set of designing men, who, by multiplying imaginary fears, may create real evils.

IT is certain, government will not intermeddle, without first securing a solid and free trade to the Company, and also paying them a full compensation for the forts, stores, &c. which they shall give up, and also a full reimbursement of all the expences which they have incurred in their late acquisitions. Even on this footing, we should hold our charter on a most lucrative tenure, and every Proprietor would soon find his stock at least one third more in value, than it is kept down to at present, by artifice and intrigue.

MY next shall enter into a more minute discussion of these matters, and perhaps open the eyes of some who have not already seen clearly through all the dark manœuvres of the Directors.



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THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER II.

WEDNESDAY, *September 10*, 1766.

OUR intention was to have given a very particular account of the trade of the East India Company, the state of their affairs, and the revenues of Indostan, as they now stand, prior to any animadversions upon the intrigues and designs of the Directors of that Company, as we would be loth to bring charges so severe as we have to produce against any body of men, without first shewing the ground upon which we found them. But in deference to several of our correspondents, and out of gratitude for the aid which they have been kind enough to furnish so early towards the carrying on this paper, we for this day postpone the execution of our plan, and insert the following letters, which we hope will be acceptable to our readers.

*To the* EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

S I R,

FROM the spirit and candor which breathe through your first performance,

ance, I cannot help lamenting that you did not take up your pen immediately upon the first specimen of mal-conduct in the direction of the East-India Company. The career of the *artful* and *designing* might then have been cut four months shorter, and many honest men, who have been the dupes of cunning and treachery, might have been saved from the heavy losses which they have sustained in their fortunes, by the preposterous fluctuations brought about in the value of that fund in which they were Proprietors. Several worthy advocates for the cause of the public have however appeared, from time to time, in the daily papers, who, although they have failed in stemming the torrent of corruption, have nevertheless been some check upon that avidity of growing rich at the expence of their constituents, which has directed all the measures of the Directors.

———*Dives qui fieri vult*

*Et cito vult fieri*———

Juv.

is a maxim never more uniformly made good at any one period of time than since the 12th day of April last; not even in the memorable years of 1720 and 1721.

IN former directions of the East India Company, it was the constant practice to read every piece of intelligence in full board, and publish it as soon as possible after it was read: and great care was taken to circulate the

news at the same instant to every part of the town, to prevent jobbing, and to give all the Proprietors an equal chance of profiting. A short abstract of the different articles of intelligence was written down on slips of paper, and dispatched by runners kept ready for that purpose, the minute the doors of the India House were opened; and one or more of these slips were generally posted up on one of the pillars of the Exchange. If ever this method was proper to be suspended, it was in time of war, or public calamity, when such news might arrive as could not fail of materially affecting the credit of the Company. This very circumstance did happen in a former direction, and occasioned a prudent deviation from the general rule; which gave so much offence to the set of men now in, but then out of power, that although the very being of the Company was at stake, nothing less than a speedy and full recital of the ruinous situation of affairs abroad could silence their unjust and ill-timed clamours. With what justice, then, in the most flourishing state which this or any other commercial body ever did or can hope to arrive at, have they, by an obstinate silence, attempted to conceal from the Proprietors the particulars of a success so glorious for the Company, so salutary for its credit, and so advantageous to every individual concerned. Their behavi-  
our



our on this occasion, and on the 18th of June, justly acquired them the appellation of *Dumb Directors*; a surname that will probably stick by them as long as their date of power, which some people guess will not exceed the month of April next.

BUT their conduct on that day (the 18th of June) showing more abilities and finesse than people in general are willing to allow them, it will not be amiss to describe it particularly.

ON that morning when the Proprietors attended, big with expectation of the news they were to hear, and of the resolutions of the board thereupon, a friend of the Directors, ready prepared, made a motion to increase the dividend 2 per cent. This motion, as plainly appeared by his after-conduct, was insidious, and only intended as a trap for the Proprietors, as a tub for the whale, that the Directors might pass with safety on. The motion was supported, and a debate ensued upon it: at length up rose Mr. Chairman, in all the majesty of a full-bottomed wig, and declared, with a solemn face, "That the Directors held the motion to be premature." Having thus spoke, he swallowed his tongue, sat down and composed himself, with the same empty importance with which he had risen. His friend the motion-maker, fully convinced by the compleat reasoning contained

tained in the word *premature*, withdrew his motion, eat up all he said, and the Proprietors were turned out no wiser than they went in.

THE next game to be play'd was, to impose upon the public by false reports and rumours from India of Lord Clive's death, of Nabobs in the moon, of Mr. Law, and of the Marattas, &c. &c. They gained so far by this trick, as to give one old woman the cholick, she sold out in a great pannic, and there were not wanting people in the secret to buy it up. At the same time, an association and joint stock was formed, to carry on their projects at Amsterdam; and the news-papers here were furnished out with false accounts, to depreciate our stock, by magnifying our debts. One man had the impudence to state the advance on the original stock as a debt due by the Company. It would require more rhetoric than falls to the share of any of the present Directors, to persuade a man, that the more he can get for his stock, the more he becomes in debt; or in other words, the richer he is, the poorer he is: but such paltry arts only serve to expose the weakness, and betray the cloven foot of him who dares to employ them.

I AM afraid, Sir, I have incroached too much already upon your *Examiner*; but I will just add a piece of intelligence to the  
Pro-

Proprietors, which you probably may have heard of, though not from the Directors, who are too wise to propagate truths that make against them. On Friday last was paid in to the India House a sum nearly equivalent to the whole debt upon shipping, about which the Directors make such a rout; and as to our debt in Bengal, they may be assured that by this time it is all paid off, and investments made for the necessary cargoes all over India, for two years to come; besides which, we have a debt due to us of about 450,000 l. by the Nabob of Arcott, and well secured upon his possessions.

LET any Proprietor make a calculation upon these facts, and then see if our affairs stand on the footing given out by the friends of the Directors.

I am, Sir,

Your most humble Servant,

A. B.

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T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

N U M B E R    I I I .

SATURDAY, *September* 13, 1766.

**T**HE Directors and their friends having taken great pains to represent the East India Company almost in a state of bankruptcy, at this very time, when I am thoroughly convinced, neither this Company nor any other ever was in so flourishing a condition; I shall now endeavour to give a state of their affairs, not only in India, but at home. The former shall be the subject of this paper, and I hope will be found tolerably exact; and the latter, if it is not so, the world will at least see that I make the most ample allowances. If the Directors, instead of stabbing the credit of the Company by terrifying their constituents, upon the Exchange, and in every Coffee-house, had complied with their obligations of balancing their books, as required by the bye-laws, or had laid a full state of the Company's affairs before

before the Proprietors, there would have been less occasion for this paper \*.

I SHALL begin with the revenues of Bengal for this year, taken from a state made out by Lord Clive in India, before the last ships failed.

	Rupees.	Pounds sterl.
Bahar - - -	56,00000	700,000
Bengal - - -	150,00000	1,875,000
Company's Lands of Burdwan, &c. - -	50,00000	625,000
Customs of Calcutta - -	1,50000	18,750
Duties on salt, beetlenut, and tobacco, to be allowed to the Company, in lieu of their share of the monopoly -	9,00000	112,500
	<hr/>	<hr/>
	R. 266,50000	£ 3,331,250

To show the moderation of this state, I need only mention, that the revenues of Bengal and Bahar, which are here set down

\* The 29th bye-law is in these words: " Item, it is ordained, That the court of Directors shall annually, in the month of June, cause a general state of the Company's affairs to be drawn out and laid before them for their observation."

The 15th bye-law ordains, That the books containing the general accounts of the Company in England shall be balanced to the 30th of June yearly, and the balance drawn out within three calendar months after every 30th of June; and the books of the Company in India are also ordered to be yearly balanced, and sent home.



at no more than 206 lacks, or 2,575,000 l. were rated in the year 1762, according to the accounts taken from the books of Cofsim Ali Khan's exchequer, at 2 crors 86 lacks, 76,813 rupees, or 3,584,601 l. sterling. So that they exceed the above state by one million nine thousand six hundred and one pounds sterling.

THE accounts hitherto delivered in by the canongoes, or public book-keepers, as the true state of the revenue of the several provinces ceded to the Company, have always been found false and under-rated. It appears that the districts of Burdwan, Midnapoor, Chettygong, and Calcutta, never yielded in former times more than 40 lacks, or 500,000 l. sterling; but since they have been in our possession, they have produced yearly about 50 lacks, or 625,000 l. without varying more than 6 per cent. between the best and worst years, notwithstanding the late disturbances. From these considerations, and our superior method of collection, which would be too long to explain here, the best judges of these affairs are persuaded, that Bahar and Bengal will soon produce, with proper management, five hundred thousand pounds sterling annually more than they are stated at in the account which we have here followed.

WE shall next proceed to an estimate of the money to be paid this year, out of the revenue of Bengal, viz.

	Rupees.	£.
For the army - - -	46,80,000	585,000
Military stores - - -	3,20,000	40,000
Marine expences - - -	3,60,000	45,000
Civil list - - -	16,00000	200,000
Fortifications and buildings at Calcutta - - -	8,00000	100,000
Barracks and buildings to be made at Cossimbuzar, Patna, and Mongheer - - -	6,00000	75,000
Yearly revenue to the King	26,00000	325,000
Ditto to the Nabob, for his expences, 18 lacks, and for the charges of his government and collections 35 lacks and 40,000 rupees; but on this last sum it is expected there will be a saving to the Company of 8 lacks, of which, however, I shall take no notice, but set it down in full	53,40000	667,500
Total of this year's expences at Bengal - - -	<u>163,00000</u>	<u>2,037,500</u>
So that from the amount of the yearly revenues of Bengal, as stated above, being - - -		£ 3,331,250
Deducting the expences for the present year, which amount, by this account, to - - -		<u>2,037,500</u>
There remains a balance to the Company, out of this year's revenue, of -		1,293,750
And to this sum must be added, the remainder unpaid of 50 lacks due		
C		from

	Brought over	£ 1,293,750
from Souja Dowla, by treaty, being 45		
lacks, or	- - -	562,500

Which makes in all	- - -	1,856,250
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From this I deduct the debt of 72 lacks, which it is said we owe by bonds, &c. in Bengal - - - 900,000

And also a balance of the restitution money agreed by treaty to be made good by the Nabob, for the losses sustained by the merchants and Company's servants, and those who were cut off in the late war, amounting to 18 lacks.

And the donation promised by the late Nabob to the army, a balance yet due of 3 lacks.

Which sums, making together 21 lacks, must be regarded as a debt due by the Company, since they now put themselves in the Nabob's place. I hear, indeed, that the Directors have sent out orders for stopping the payment of the restitution; yet as that order is thought to be illegal, and in this account I make every allowance, I shall deduct the whole 21 lacks, or - - - 262,500

262,500	
<hr/>	1,162,500

So that this year there will remain a balance of £ 693,750

THUS,



THUS, after making the most ample allowances, stating every thing to be paid at the highest rate, and every thing to be received at the lowest, there remains a clear balance of six hundred and ninety-three thousand seven hundred and fifty pounds in favour of the Company from Bengal alone; and this is the real situation of their affairs which have been represented as in the most lamentable condition.

BESIDES the accounts above exhibited, we ought also to take notice of the revenues of other provinces granted at the same time; which although they will not probably be received this year, will still increase the revenue in time to come.

THE province of Orixá, at present in possession of 3 or 4 thousand Morattas, can be easily taken, and as easily defended, having only one inlet through the hills to the south west. The revenues may be reckoned at 15 lacks, but we shall put them down only at 10 lacks, or 125,000 l.

THE five northern provinces, or fircars, when in possession of the French, were settled at 35 lack, or 437,500 l.

THE grant of these fircars, though an acquisition of great consequence, was not mentioned to the proprietors at the last court; for what reason, the Directors can best explain.

The revenues and duties  
at Madrafs, Massulipatam,  
and Nazampatam, (exclu-  
sive of the five northern  
provinces, or siccars) a-  
mount to - - - 670,000 Pagodas.

And the expence of the  
establishment there only to 450,000

So that there remains a  
clear balance in favour of \_\_\_\_\_  
the Company of - - - 220,000 Pag. or £ 88,000

BUT this I shall not bring into the ac-  
count, because that sum may be reckoned  
counter-ballanced by the overplus expences  
of the other governments in India, which do  
not support themselves from their own reve-  
nues, of which I here give a short sketch as  
follows:

AT Bombay, the expence of the esta-  
blishment exceeds in a small sum the reve-  
nues and duties there.

AT Bencoolan, the establishment amounts  
to 50,000 *l.* sterling, while the duties and  
revenues there do not yield above a few  
thousand pounds; and St. Helena costs the  
Company about 16,000 *l.* *per ann.* for the  
establishment there.

So that, as I have said above, I leave these  
expences to be compensated by the saving of  
88,000 *l.* at Madrafs.

LET us now proceed to a general state  
of the Company's effects and debts due to  
them in the East Indies.

BALANCE

BALANCE that will remain in Bengal this year, after paying every demand and charge, as before stated, } 693,750

BALANCE due by the Nabob of Arcot, which can be received at pleasure, as we have his country for security, } 450,000

DEBTS due by the French for maintenance of prisoners, } 250,000

REMAINING in china, after loading 15 ships arrived, and to arrive this year, } 200,000

AMOUNT of effects shipped off from London last winter and spring, which long before this time (it is to be hoped) are in possession of our servants in India. } 650,000

THIS is besides the goods sent out the former year, remaining in the warehouses abroad, or sold, and not paid for.

COST of our fortifications, &c. which every man must allow to be the best laid out money the Company ever paid, and may properly be called, the purchase-money of our revenues. No man would wish this sum returned to our treasury on condition of destroying these fortifications, or would, in the present situation, hesitate to vote four times that sum for making such fortifications, if they did not already exist. } 3,000,000

To this account might be added the Company's one-third of half a million, still due on the Manilla ransom; but as this is an affair not finally settled between the two crowns, we leave it out.

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Total of the Company's effects in India 5,243,750

FROM this fair and impartial state both of our revenues and effects in Bengal, may be formed an idea of the present flourishing situation

situation of the Company's affairs, and every Proprietor may be able to judge from calculation and deduction, whether the Directors have acted a just and honourable part in refusing them a small proportion out of their own absolute property. From the above calculation, it is also manifest that Bengal yielding a revenue of 1,293,000 l. and the four northern provinces 437,000 l. with half a million more, which by a moderate computation we may suppose they will amount to in a few years, we shall soon enjoy a clear territorial revenue of 2 millions, after defraying all expences of the civil establishment in the East Indies, charges of buildings, fortifications, barracks, &c. and when these last articles of expence cease, their amount will be so much addition to the clear ballance.

It shall be our business in another paper to lay before the Proprietors, a true state of their commerce as we have now of their revenues, by which it will appear that the profits arising from thence amount to more than 640,000 l. which of itself would afford a dividend of 20 per cent.

If then the parliament should take the territorial possessions from the Company, allowing them 3 or 4 millions by yearly payments for the value of their fortifications, artillery, &c. and taking upon themselves  
the

the expence of all our establishments in the Indies, by which the nation would acquire 2 millions a year clear in a few years; yet even upon that footing, the profits upon the trade alone, will, as I have already said, yield, in a short time, a dividend of 15 if not 20 *per cent.* and therefore nothing could be more unjust, or I may venture to say more wicked, than to refuse to increase the dividend to 10 *per cent.* at the last general court, the consequences of which have been fatal to infinite numbers who have sold their stock for less than half its value.

IF it could even be supposed that the trade of the Company should hereafter yield them nothing, is it possible to imagine that the parliament would hesitate to allow to the Proprietors a sum of 320,000 *l.* yearly out of the immense revenues of which it is supposed they are to be deprived by a strong exertion of the legislative authority? No man can doubt of this, and therefore in every view, the conduct of the Directors in refusing the increase of dividend to 10 *per cent.* must excite the indignation of every unprejudiced mind.



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THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER IV.

WEDNESDAY, *September 17, 1766.*

THE state of the Company's affairs in India, as exhibited in my last paper, I find has given general satisfaction to the Proprietors. They are now in some measure on a par with the Directors, and are enabled to oppose them with arguments founded upon facts; which have hitherto been so industriously concealed.

THE recent publication of our first charter, has likewise put it in every man's power to compare the conduct of the Directors, with the duty prescribed to them by our constitutions, and we can no longer be in doubt as to the right of the Proprietors to demand an exhibition of papers which hitherto it has hardly been possible to attain.

BEFORE I enter upon the subject of this day's paper, it will not be amiss to observe, that in the estimate in my last, of our revenues

venues and disbursements at Bengal, I have charged as articles of expence, the debts of 900,000 l. which we owe by bonds, and 262,500 l. upon account of restitution; but these sums are temporary expences, and will not for the future be charged on the yearly revenue. The sum of 75,000 l. charged for barracks and buildings at Casmibezar, &c. will also cease after the present year, so that our clear annual revenue will then amount to 1,363,750 l. besides the five northern fircars, and the province of Orixa, and it is further to be hoped, that the expence of 100,000 l. for public works at Calcutta, will not continue long.

I MEAN now to acquit myself of the promise made to my fellow proprietors, of laying before them a state of their affairs at home. I wish I could pretend to the same accurate knowledge of this, that I have in those of India; I have not here access to the proper papers; this is a satisfaction the Directors chuse to deny to their constituents; I am therefore obliged to proceed upon general ideas, and the lights I have received from men much conversant in the India trade.

FOREMOST in our list of effects shall be placed the sums due to us from the Government, which are precise and fixed.

Debts

# 26 THE EAST INDIA No. IV.

Debts due to the Company, viz.

Loan to the Government of our entire capital, by charter 1698,	£.
Ditto to Ditto - - 6th of Queen Anne	2,000,000
These two sums due to us from the Government, form our present capital stock, which gives the right of voting, and upon which our dividends are made	1,200,000
The Government owes us besides, a loan 17th George II made without any call on the Proprietors	3,200,000
	1,000,000

So the total of the debt which the nation owes to the Company, upon which we receive an interest of 3 per cent. is - £ 4,200,000

Effects in England, viz.

Houses, warehouses, and all other immovable stock, I value at - - -	£ 200,000
Goods in hand remaining of former cargoes, or due for goods uncleared, including the prompt payment made a few years ago - - -	1,200,000
Produce of the cargoes arrived and to arrive this year, after deducting duties, on a moderate computation	2,750,000
	Sum 4,150,000
Total of effects, debts, &c. belonging to the Company in England - - -	£ 8,350,000

HAVING thus given what we take to be a true state of our effects at home, let us next see what is the amount of our debts there. I state nothing on account of the expence of the



the civil establishment in England, or for the rents of houses and warehouses there, because the duties on private trade, inwards and outwards, &c. fully compensate them.

	Dr.	Cr.
Brought over - - -	-	£ 8,350,000
Due for money borrowed by act of parliament, viz.		
Bonds, afterwards converted into annuities, bearing 3 <i>per</i> <i>cent.</i> interest by 23 Geo. II. c. 22. - - -		£ 3,000,000
Bonds still remaining, the ex- act amount not known, but we shall suppose them, nei- ther to exceed, nor fall short of the sum allowed by par- liament to be borrowed -	3,000,000	
Total of borrowed money	£ 6,000,000	
Occasional Debts, viz.		
Owing upon account of freight - - -		750,000
Restitution money paid to the Company by Jasseir Ali Cawn, 1757, for the pri- vate sufferers in the war with Sowrajah Dowla, which was illegally detained by the Directors, and now awarded to be paid by a de- cree in Chancery, about 5 lacks of rupees, or -		62,500
The Company's acceptances for draughts from India, by the ships of last season, at one year's sight, about -		200,000
Carry forward		7,012,500

	Dr.	Cr.
Brought over	£ 7,012,500	£ 8,350,000
Expences of 1000 soldiers to be sent out this season, at 20 l. each	- - - - -	20,000
We shall further allow, in lieu of all other debts due in England, by the Company, such as for balances of former cargoes outwards, customs, and to the Bank of England, a general sum, which we are persuaded will more than discharge the above debts	- - - - -	1,200,000
Total of debts due by Company	- - -	£ 8,232,500
Clear balance in favour of the Company, or exceedings of their effects over their debts in England alone	- - -	£ 117,500
Balance of our effects in India, as stated in our last paper	- - -	5,243,750
		Total £ 5,361,250

To prevent all cavils, I will declare once more, that the foregoing estimate of debts and effects at home is not taken from accounts upon which exact calculations may be founded, but only from a general knowledge of those matters; and as I have on every article of credit made the most ample allowances, and on the debit always rather exceeded, I flatter myself, that, on the whole, it forms a pretty true, and rather modest representation of the Company's present

present flourishing situation. If the Directors dispute my estimates, it is their business, from proper vouchers, to refute them.

ALTHOUGH by this state we have shewn clearly that the Company possesses in India and at home, *five millions three hundred and sixty-one thousand two hundred and fifty Pounds*, of clear effects more than they owe, yet still it may be objected, that the Company will not be in cash, from these effects, to answer the dividend required. To this I answer, that the circulating bonds, which exceed the debt due by the government, in 1,800,000 l. and are in our account stated as paid off, will be a fund of ready cash in our hands, near six times more than sufficient to answer that demand: For the cargoes of this and the former year unapplied, amount to 3,950,000 l. and the debts for freights and other articles, exclusive of the circulating bonds, amount only to 2,232,500 l. so that there remains a balance of 1,717,500 l. And if the Company's debts in England should in fact exceed, by near a million and a half, the sum at which we have stated them, there still would be enough to pay the dividend of 10 per cent.

AND let me observe in general, that it would be the height of imprudence to pay off these bonds; and I will venture to say,  
4 that

that none but an enemy of the Company could propose it. These bonds, though in fact chargeable on the Company as a debt, are, at the same time, one of the great sources of our riches, as well as a national conveniency. By means of this valuable privilege granted by parliament, of pledging their security, as well as our own, we are enabled to raise 3 millions, at the low interest of 3 per cent. which sum, employed in trade, yields at least six times as much. Nothing then can be more absurd than to talk of paying off these bonds; on the contrary, I am of opinion that it would be much to our advantage, if we were allowed to issue a million or two more, to discharge our debts for freights, and to make our purchases for the future with ready money, which in the end would turn out highly beneficial to our commerce.

THUS after demonstrating to the Proprietors the solidity of their bottom at home, their happy situation abroad, and the great territorial increasing revenues they have acquired in the east, it only remains to give them, as far as in me lies, a general view of their commerce, by which they may be enabled to judge how far that alone could be able to support them in credit and prosperity, in case government should interfere, and assume the territorial revenues to themselves.

THIS

THIS bugbear of government's interfering has been the happiest engine in the hands of the Directors, for frightening the Proprietors, and beating down the value of the stock ; but I have shown already, that there can be no cause to apprehend any thing from that quarter but what is founded on justice and generosity. If it could be supposed that the parliament would assume the lands, they will also undertake the expence of defending them, and repay us fully all the money laid out on fortifications, artillery, &c. Reduced then to the districts necessary for the purposes of trade, without the expence of defending them, and their revenues being sufficient to defray our civil establishments, we shall then enjoy the profits of our trade clear and undiminished,

— BY making an estimate, then, of these profits, we shall represent the commercial situation of the Company, upon supposition of government's doing the worst that can be apprehended from it ; but it is to be considered, that our commerce, in these circumstances, would certainly increase, both as to extent and profit. Our European rivals crushed, the Indies in a manner subdued, and our Company alone trading under the wings of a powerful nation, we should be able surely to carry dealings to a pitch they never could reach before. But that I  
I may



may not seem to raise vain expectations in the minds of the Proprietors, I shall make all my computations upon experience of the past, and leave their imaginations to supply the rest.

LET us reckon that, one year with another, 27 ships will be sent from England to India, their cargoes outwards, and the produce of their sales there, I estimate as follows, viz.

	Prime cost in England.	Produce in Indian money.	Produce in sterling.
5 Ships for Bengal	£ 95,000	10 lacks	125,000
2 Ditto for Madras	21,000	70,000 pagodas	28,000
5 Ditto for Bombay	150,000	16 lacks	200,000
15 Ditto for China	210,000		280,000
Sent to China from Bencoolen, about 800 tons of pepper, by the ships which call there	— — 50,000		100,000

£ 526,000

Then from the produce deducting the prime cost — £ 733,000

526,000

The difference will be a clear profit on our outward trade, of £ 207,000

We have next to value the profits on our homeward trade, upon which our chief commercial advantages depend.

	Prime cost in India.	Prime cost in sterling.	Produce in England.
The cargoes of 5 ships from Bengal	4,300,000 rup.	540,000	1,175,000
Ditto of 2 ships from Madras	— 340,000 pag.	136,000	200,000
Ditto of 5 ships from Bombay	— 280,000 rup.	175,000	250,000
Ditto of 15 ships from China	— —	450,000	1,800,000

£ 1,301,000 £ 3,425,000

Then from the produce deducting the prime cost —

1,301,000

Remains

2,124,000

From

	Brought over	£ 207,000
From which is to be deducted		
for customs (the excise being		
paid by the purchaser)	£ 600,000	
And for freight	432,000	
	<hr/>	<hr/>
		1,032,000
There will remain then a balance of clear profit		
on our homeward trade, of		1,092,000
Which, with the profits on our outward trade,		<hr/>
amounts in all to		£ 1,259,000

AND let no man be surpris'd at these profits; for without these, or much higher, how could the Company have maintained wars for fifteen years in the different parts of India, before they acquired almost any territorial revenue?

THUS, upon our supposition, the profits of trade will amount to one million two hundred and ninety-nine thousand pounds: But this makes no allowance for losses at sea, from weather, or the enemy, average upon damaged goods, mismanagement, &c. Make then what allowance for these accidents you please, even to almost one half of the above profits; we still have demonstrated what we venture to assert, That our trade alone, even upon the footing that it is at present, does actually afford, and ought always to afford in time to come, 640,000 l. a sum sufficient to pay an annual dividend of 20 *per cent*.

SINCE then, by the real state of our free stock, from the revenues coming in to us, and from the profits upon trade alone, we are every way justified in making the reason-

able demand of 10 *per cent.* dividend, how can the Directors justify their obstinate denial: If the Proprietors insisted upon the payment immediately, there would be some colour for refusal; but we only ask it to be paid nine months hence; which will give a time for the goods on hand to be sold, and many of the Company's debts to be acquitted. Nothing can be more absurd and unjust than the excuse of the Directors, that it is necessary to clear off all our debts, before we pretend to increase our dividend. If this reason is good at all, it is equally good against all dividend whatsoever. Possessed as we are of an absolute free stock, upon a balance of our books, and of immense profits coming in, upon that very stock, are we to deny ourselves a present subsistence, because we have some debts standing against us? No man in considerable private trade, is in any other situation. He owes a great deal, and has a great deal owing to him; and if, upon a fair balance, he finds he has an overplus stock, he reckons himself well, and does not hesitate to enjoy a part of the intermediate profits of his trade to make him live with ease and affluence. Nor would any wise man, possessed of a landed estate of 10,000 l. a year, confine himself to live on 500 l. because he happened to owe a debt of 20,000 l.

BESIDES,

BESIDES, in our situation, it is the highest injustice, to those Proprietors who were embarked in the same bottom, who partook of all our former risks, and now, in the midst of success, are refused a share. They, from many causes, may be incapacitated from keeping up their stock, till a future day. In the mean time they are obliged to part with it vastly below its real value, and are in a manner robbed of their property, by the intrigues of the very men, whose views in depreciating it to others, were that they might be able to buy it up for themselves.

AN immediate declaration of the increase would remedy all those evils ; it would fix the value of stock at 270 or more, for those that are obliged to sell out. And for those who are willing to continue Proprietors, but have no way of judging of the value of their stock but by the dividend, they will now entertain better hopes, and no longer be the dupes of artful men, who see farther into consequences than themselves.

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THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.

NUMBER V.

SATURDAY, *September 20*, 1766.

THE public will acknowlege that I have complied with my engagements to them and the Proprietors, in exposing the grounds upon which I went in censuring the conduct of the Directors; and as I submit the foundation of my complaints to their examination, so do I also the fairness and justice of the inferences I draw. After demonstrating by calculation and accounts, built upon incontestible truths, that our Company is in a situation beyond what even the most sanguine imagination could ever have carried it; after shewing that by our free stock, by our yearly revenues, and by our trade, we are every way intitled to a dividend greatly superior to that we ask; can I be blamed for stigmatizing the refusal of the Directors at the last general court with the most odious epithets of contempt and indignation?

AND



AND yet it may be said, that their motives, if they cannot sanctify, may at least palliate their fault; that they may have acted at that time from excess of caution, from wanting proper time to recollect themselves, or from perhaps that little spirit of pride so inherent in our natures, that turns us aside from an avowal of our wrong, that we may not afford a triumph to our adversaries.

IF this indeed was the case, I make the most tender allowances for the weakness of the human heart. Far be it from me to impute errors of judgment to any one as unpardonable faults, or to construe their frailties into crimes. I had reason, from what was past, to suspect the designs of the Directors, and the indiscreet behaviour of several of their number in the Alley and upon the Royal Exchange, sufficiently justified the reflections I have made; but in deference to those who ascribe their conduct to less culpable motives, I will suspend my final judgment till next general court; it will be there that their motives as well as their actions will appear: To err is human, but to persist in error, argues the greatest depravity of the human mind. If the Directors, after proper information and full recollection, still persist in their denial of justice, then every imputation of guilt will be properly applied, and the Proprietors will be justified in charging them

them with incapacity, mismanagement, and base designs, and they may safely exercise the power reposed in them by the charter, of chasing such roguish and blundering pilots from the helm of their affairs.

PEOPLE who have not studied our constitutions with the attention they ought, may think I have ascribed a power to the Proprietors that does not belong to them. To satisfy all such, I shall here give a fair transcript of two clauses of our charter, the one relating to our power of turning out the Directors, and the other to our right of regulating the dividends.

“ AND moreover, we do by these presents,  
 “ will, direct, and appoint, that the said Directors, or the major part of them, for the  
 “ time being, shall from time to time, upon  
 “ demand to be made by any *nine* or more  
 “ of the said members, having each of them  
 “ 500 l. or more interest or share of the said  
 “ stock, within ten-days after such demand,  
 “ summon and call such general courts to be  
 “ held of the members of the same Company qualified for electors as aforesaid;  
 “ and in default of the said Directors, or  
 “ the major part of them, to summon and  
 “ call such a court, it shall and may be lawful to and for the *nine*, or more members,  
 “ having each 500 l. sterling stock as aforesaid, upon ten days notice in writing, to  
 “ be

“ be fixed upon the Royal Exchange in  
“ London, to summon and hold a general  
“ court, and there to do and dispatch any  
“ business relating to the government or af-  
“ fairs of the said Company, and to hear and  
“ debate any complaint that shall be made  
“ against any Director or Directors for mis-  
“ management of his or their office or  
“ offices; and if such Director or Directors  
“ shall not clear him or themselves of such  
“ complaint, to the satisfaction of the major  
“ part of the members of the same Compa-  
“ ny in the said general court assembled, that  
“ then within ten days, another general  
“ court shall be called and held as aforesaid  
“ of the members of the same Company  
“ qualified to vote as aforesaid, finally to de-  
“ termine the same by the majority of their  
“ votes as aforesaid, who may remove or  
“ displace all or any of the said Directors for  
“ such misdemeanors or abuse of their offi-  
“ ces, and elect and chuse others in his or  
“ their rooms in manner before prescribed ;  
“ and in every such case, where any Direct-  
“ or or Directors shall happen to die or be  
“ removed, or his office shall otherwise be-  
“ come void before the expiration of the  
“ term for which he shall have been elect-  
“ ed, the major part of the members of the  
“ same Company to be assembled in a gene-  
“ ral court, and being qualified as aforesaid,  
“ shall

“ shall and may elect or chuse any other  
 “ member or members of the said Compa-  
 “ ny, qualified as aforesaid, in the office of  
 “ such Director or Directors that shall so die  
 “ or be removed, or whose office shall be-  
 “ come void ; which person so to be chosen,  
 “ shall continue in the said office until the  
 “ next usual time hereby appointed for elec-  
 “ tion, until others shall be duly sworn and  
 “ chosen, unless he shall be removed as afore-  
 “ said.”

THE paragraph relating to the dividend is  
 in these words: “ That all and every of the  
 “ said members qualified for electors as afore-  
 “ said, shall have full power, and they are  
 “ hereby authorized in the general courts  
 “ or assemblies aforesaid, by majority of  
 “ their votes as aforesaid, *to make and consti-*  
 “ *tute reasonable bye-laws, constitutions, or-*  
 “ *ders, and ordinances from time to time as*  
 “ *well for raising and calling in any pay-*  
 “ *ment of monies for an additional joint-*  
 “ *stock, for the better carrying on and ma-*  
 “ *naging the said trade, and for applying and*  
 “ *proportioning the profits, advantages and*  
 “ *produce arising by the said joint-stock and*  
 “ *trade, as for the good government of the*  
 “ *said trade to the East Indies.*”

THESE clauses fix beyond dispute the  
 power of the Proprietors over the Directors ;  
 and there is a very remarkable precedent of  
 the



the exercise of this power by the General Court held on the 9th December 1726.

It appears that there was a complaint lodged that day against Mr. Eccleston, one of the Directors, (it was not a combination of the whole Board) for unfair proceedings at the sales, where he, by concealing the quality of the goods, and taking advantage of his knowledge of their real worth, had laid a scheme to deceive the buyers, and engross the whole profits to himself. Although that affair related to the sale of Goods, and the present to the sale of Stock, yet the reasons alledged against the Directors are so similar to our own complaints, that I cannot omit transcribing them from the Memorial of the Merchants, as to be found in the Craftsman of that date, leaving the reader to make his own comment upon them.

It is set forth, That the Directors, “ by  
 “ the then private foreknowledge of that  
 “ affair, would have made an unjust gain at  
 “ the Company’s expence, and have done a  
 “ manifest injury to the less knowing buy-  
 “ ers ; that those Directors who are buyers  
 “ at these sales have evidently too much ad-  
 “ vantage of others, and that even the Dutch  
 “ have often had the same unjust advantages  
 “ communicated to them by some means or  
 “ other, to the great detriment of the Com-  
 “ pany, and of the fair buyers of our nation,  
 “ who



“ who would have been ruined by such a  
 “ course of trade, and the Company must  
 “ have been deprived of any other buyers  
 “ than their own Directors and the Dutch  
 “ Gentlemen, or such as could obtain an  
 “ equal knowledge with them of this secret;  
 “ and that there can be no effectual remedy  
 “ of their evils unless all the buyers be put  
 “ upon the same foot, &c.”

THE Craftsman relates, that Mr. Ecclestone, incapable of denying the charge, only pleaded in excuse, the frailties of his nature, and the merit of his past services, which inclined the Court to lenity. He was only suspended from his office, and thus escaped a more exemplary punishment, which his misbehaviour surely deserved.

I KNOW this story will be applied, and every man will be for finding out his own Mr. Ecclestone in the present Court of Directors: If the cap fits any of their crowns let them wear it; my design, as I have observed above, is only to quote a precedent for the exercise of the power of calling the Directors to account, which is lodged by Charter with the Proprietors.

IF it were necessary to adduce instances in support of the opinion I hold, with regard to the treatment the Directors deserve, if they still persist in injustice and mismanagement, I might quote the authority of a well-governed state that has lately dismissed with disgrace

the Directors of their Bank, upon parallel accusations ; an article of news in the Daily Advertiser last Saturday, will explain what I point at : it runs thus.

“ LETTERS from Stockholm, dated August  
 “ the 21st, say, that the principal charges  
 “ contained in the nine articles which have  
 “ occasioned the dismissal of all the deputies  
 “ of the Bank is, that they have disposed  
 “ of large sums, conferred considerable employments,  
 “ and regulated important affairs, without giving any *information*  
 “ thereof to the Commissioners of the said  
 “ Bank ; that, in spite of the ordinances of  
 “ the secret Committee of 1764, they have  
 “ advanced upwards of fourteen tons of gold  
 “ to the Crown, on the false principle, that  
 “ the interest of the Crown and the Bank  
 “ were the same.”

THE whole passage is extremely apposite, and the last paragraph so peculiarly applicable to the late transactions of our Directors, with the Government, that I cannot let it pass unnoticed. I am not so well versed in Swedish coin as I am in Sterling or India, but I conceive that if it be a crime at Stockholm, for Directors to advance fourteen tons of gold to the Government, without consulting their constituents, it cannot be a virtue in London to treat about the surrender of one hundred and sixty lacks, or two millions Sterling *per ann.* without authority from the proprietors,  
 out

out of whose pockets it is to be taken. I shall expect to hear that mystery also cleared up at the General Court, and will be happy to find the Directors able to exculpate themselves from so heavy a charge. In the mean time I repeat, that I repose myself on the justice of Parliament, and cannot look for rapine or violence from the Guardians of the liberty and property of Great Britain. Public credit too is a most dangerous subject to tamper with; attempt but to remove the smallest prop that serves to sustain that amazing system, and you shake the whole superstructure; foreigners behold the danger, withdraw their confidence, and leave the tottering fabric to overwhelm in ruins the nation who raised it: But at all events, should reasons of policy induce the Parliament to be rather severe upon the East India Company, I have shewn that we shall still enjoy untouched a most considerable free estate, and a flourishing commerce, that must immediately yield 15, and soon encrease to 20 *per cent.* for an annual dividend. Our stock, of course, must raise to four hundred, or five hundred *per cent.* in value, or even to five hundred and sixty, the price at which is actually sold the East India stock of the Dutch; a wise and cautious people, who, with half our advantages, do not hesitate to grant to their Proprietors a dividend of upwards of twenty *per cent.* nor has the state ever yet thought of interfering with their profits.

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T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER,  
NUMBER VI.

TUESDAY, *September 23*, 1766.

**A**MONG the various arts devised by the faction of the Directors, to scare the timorous, and entrap the unwary, none has been more successfully employed than the repetition of the word Bubble. The nation had been too often bubbled out of their property; and still smarting in a manner from the deep wounds of the South Sea in 1720, the very name carried terror along with it: The Directors saw this, and knew how to avail themselves of it; the golden harvest of our East India prosperity lay fair before them; they wanted to gather it in solely for themselves, and they hung up this scarecrow, to frighten away others who wished to come in for a share.

I WILL not quarrel with the Directors for their term; on the contrary, I agree to it,  
in



in its full extent, and shall demonstrate to my readers, that their conduct tended naturally to turn the India Company into the most notorious and barefaced bubble that ever was imposed on public credulity. My notion of a bubble is, when those in the management of affairs, knowing exactly the true situation, either conceal real advantages, to secure them wholly to themselves, or give out visionary prospects of gain, to trick the public out of their money, and fill the pockets of those in the secret. It is either way a bubble, to make a shilling pass for a guinea, as in 1720, or a guinea to pass for a shilling, as at present in 1766; and the contrivers of such iniquitous projects have the same laudable design at bottom, to build their own fortunes on the ruin of their fellow citizens. The Directors of the South Sea Company hung out false lights, to lead the unwary to shipwreck, upon their coast; the Directors of the East India Company keep us in the dark, that we may stumble into the snare that they have dressed for us.

IT is a sure mark to know a bubble, when you see it wrought up by Directors. None but those in the management can ever attempt it. Proprietors neither know enough, nor are united enough, to carry it through; besides, were they foolish enough to aim  
at



at it, one declaration from the Directors would burst their airy bubble, and reduce it to that nothing from whence it sprung. A bare exposition of the Company's affairs must infallibly destroy it; because, where men have an opportunity of seeing with their own eyes, and examining coolly, they never can be so egregiously deceived as to part with their property at half its value, or believe it ten times in value above its worth.

BUT when those in the secret conceal their accounts, and leave no opportunity to the Proprietors to come at the truth, then it is you may work on the passions of mankind, and make either their hopes or their fears subservient to your interest, as best suits you at that time.

ANOTHER criterion by which to judge of a bubble, is, when great men in the government of the state are seen to interfere. The famous *Système* or Mississippi scheme, was carried on by the Duke of Orleans, Regent of France; and in England, in 1720, our great statesmen did not disdain to lend their breaths to blow up the bubble of the South Sea. My Lord Sunderland, then at the head of the Treasury, had 50,000 *l.* of the original subscription set down in his name, without either advance or security. Mr. Craggs, senior, 30,000 *l.* Mr. Aislabye, Chancellor

Chancellor of the Exchequer, 4,000 *l.* and all this before ever the act passed the house. But you may believe the bill went on never the worse for it. Let me observe, by the way, that in this scene, the same Mr. Craggs, whom Pope has recorded as "*Statesman, yet friend to Truth,*" &c. played a most conspicuous part. After this, let no man who has money despair of an epitaph. There is an anecdote also of Mr. Aislaby, that I think ought to be clapped on his tomb-stone. When the subscription was first offered to him, he modestly declined taking any more than the trifling sum above-mentioned, but afterwards, upon serious reflection, he listened to reason and 40 *per cent.* and accepted of 20,000 *l.* more at the original price, though it was then advanced to the value I mention.

LET no man imagine, there is the most distant allusion intended to any transactions with the present men in power; except, perhaps, the weather-cock, with his worthy associates of sharpers and bankrupts, their integrity is beyond suspicion; but it is unhappy for them and the public, that their names should have been lugged in to serve private ends. The Directors knew their bubble could not be compleat without the name of a Statesman in the middle. I have shewn it to be essential to its nature; there-  
 I fore

fore, resolving to have theirs compleat in all its forms, they used every art to procure a message from Government, and did not neglect to exaggerate this message to their own purposes, when it was obtained. By this handle of danger from Administration, they knocked down the stock 30 *per cent.* in a few days, and the very rumour affected all our other funds abroad.

I WONDER how it comes about that no mention was ever made of the word Bubble, with regard to the Dutch East India Company, though their stock sells at this moment at above 560, that is, four hundred and sixty *per cent.* above its original value; the reason is very plain, the Directors, instead of concealing their advantages, make a fair display of them to their Proprietors, and honestly declare a dividend in proportion to the profits they acquire. But were they in Holland to attempt imposing upon the public, by keeping up the advices from abroad, to sink the stock to 200 *per cent.* so flagrant a deceit would rouse the indignation of that flegmatic, but resolute people; and the best that the Directors could expect would be to be *de Witted* on the occasion, and thereby avoid an enquiry which, perhaps, might bring them to more regular punishment. In that frugal and commercial state, the least fraud in the management

of their public funds, or joint stocks in trade, is looked upon in a worse light than high treason; but here, to cheat the public with address, is rather matter of boasting; he that squeezes his fortune out of the bowels of the nation, is in the high road to preferment; and we see peers at this day, whose fortunes and titles had no better foundation than a bubble.

THE Directors, faithful to their purposes, have changed their defences as occasion required, and when beat out of one strong post, have not failed to occupy another behind. Their last evasion to the Proprietors, was the danger arising to the Company's credit, should they declare an increase of dividend immediately: We are told they owe considerable sums, and should they declare the dividend required, their creditors would make a call upon them directly, and they would be obliged to sell off their goods at an undervalue, to answer their demands. Can it be supposed that any of our creditors, who never scrupled our credit in the most perilous times, should now entertain the smallest doubt, because we are to declare the trifling addition to our dividend of 64,000*l.* payable nine months hence, when we have actually in our ware-houses, and on board the *True Britain*, *Kent*, and *Grosvenor*, just arrived,

more



more than sufficient to pay all these debts, and other vessels expected every day. Should these gentlemen be so wanting to their own interest, and to ours, as to press us on this occasion, we should be under no necessity of selling off our goods at an under value, as the Directors pretend; we should find enough of people to advance the money at 4 *per cent.* to satisfy the demands of these ill-advised creditors.

BUT no argument can be more absurd, than that of not enjoying our profits because our affairs are not wound up, and that we have a great many debts outstanding, which even, perhaps, we are not able to command in a stated time, or goods in our warehouses that we cannot realize at a moment's warning; at this rate, no private merchant in London could be justified in sitting down to dinner with 100,000*l.* value in his warehouse, if he has not, in absolute cash, wherewithal to pay his debts. The contrary is so far the case, that most considerable dealers are in that situation; and still further, I will venture to affirm, that hardly a merchant in the West India or North American trade, has effects on this side the water to answer one half of his demands at home; and yet, which of them, even the most prudent, refuses to live on the profits of his trade? The India Proprietor has surely then as

E 2 good



good a right, from his situation, to enjoy 10 *per cent.* on his stock, as the other has to spend 500 *l.* a year.

IT is also unjust to say that no dividend ought to be declared till Christmas. If we have a right to it now, why conceal the value of our stock for three months longer? it only gives an opportunity for the knowing ones in the Alley, to cheat the honest Proprietor, who, judging of his stock only by the dividend declared, may be induced to part with it before that declaration is made. The bye-laws tie us up, that no dividend shall be declared in less than six months before the term of payment; but this can be no reason why it may not be declared upon a longer notice. As soon as the Directors have a perfect knowledge of the profits obtained, it is their duty, by a speedy declaration, to remove all possibility of jobbing; and if this salutary measure had been adopted at last general court, a great many evils would have been prevented, with which the Directors are now justly reproached.

IT has likewise been urged, that there is an impropriety in declaring a dividend till the Parliament meets; as if no man in this country dare partake of the fruits of his own industry without leave from Parliament. This is a doctrine new and strange, and what I fancy will not make many profelytes

lytes in this age of liberty. It is a principle upon which the right of Parliament itself is founded, that every man is master of his own property, to spend or give away at his own discretion; and he who talks otherwise is an enemy to his country, and spurns its constitution. I can see why some designing men should take pains to propagate this doctrine in our case, because, by putting off the declaration till Parliament meets, they then expect a new handle to work with on the fears of individuals, by which they hope to accomplish what they have long meditated, the engrossing all the gains to themselves.

THUS I have endeavoured to lay before the Proprietors, not only the grounds upon which I condemn the Directors, but also exposed the futility of their defences. Their conduct to me has appeared weak and culpable in the highest degree, ever since they first assumed the management of our affairs. At home, we see, they have trifled with the property of their constituents, and hitherto baffled every attempt to bring them to an explanation.

NOR has their conduct in the affairs of India been less liable to censure: They have followed, in the powers delegated to particular servants, the very measures which they so openly condemned in others; they

have armed their own minions with despotism, to ruin the faithful servants of the Company, who had risked their lives and fortunes in all our dangers ; they have occasioned heart-burnings, jealousy, and divisions, in all our settlements, and by an uncommon stretch of injustice, have, upon alledged crimes, given orders for attaching, before trial, the effects of those servants, by whose good conduct the Company's affairs had been raised to the most flourishing condition ever known : Thus rendering themselves both judge and party in their own cause.

FELLOW Proprietors, such are the Directors, whose conduct to morrow will be the subject of your deliberations. Hear them with patience, and pronounce with candor. If incapacity appear their greatest crime, let indulgence be mixed with resentment ; or if peradventure five righteous men be found among that devoted band, let not the innocent be confounded with the guilty ; but at all events, lose not sight of the true interest of the Company, and let not the property of the widow, the orphan, and of your absent friends, be given away, or your own stock, in spite of all your great acquisitions and solid profits of trade, be reduced to the state of a mere empty and air-blown bubble.

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T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER VII.

TUESDAY, *September* 30, 1766.

**I**N my last paper I endeavoured to expose the arts of the Directors, warned my fellow Proprietors of their danger, and pointed out the General Court to be held the day after, as the proper time, by an united effort, to establish the interest of the Company, and rescue their property from the hands of ill-designing men.

JUSTICE at length has declared in favour of the Proprietors, and my wishes at least are accomplished, should even my labours have little contributed to their completion. Nothing can be added to the full conviction of every man present at Merchant-Taylors-Hall on Wednesday last, from the arguments used by the gentlemen who supported the cause of the Proprietors, and refuted their adversaries with so much decency and force : yet for the sake of those who were necessarily absent on that im-



portant day, I will attempt to give the substance of what was spoken on that side; nor shall the *arguments* of the Directors, and their *three defenders*, be suppressed, if false assertions and shuffling evasions deserve that name.

THE Court was opened in the usual form; after the minutes of the last were read, and the motion therein contained withdrawn for the present, to make way for affairs of more immediate concern, the Directors ordered their clerk to read a message in writing from the Duke of Grafton, and others of his Majesty's Ministers, which had been received some time ago. Every body was anxious to hear this message: it had been long employed without doors to the very effectual purposes of keeping down the price of stock; it had been represented as full of the most dangerous threats to the Company, and striking at their very existence. Judge then of the surprize of all then present, when they found this dreadful message to be no more than a friendly intimation, "That as the  
 ' affairs of the East India Company had  
 " been mentioned in Parliament last ses-  
 " sion, it was very probable they might be  
 " taken into consideration again; therefore,  
 " from the great regard which they had  
 " for the welfare of the Company, they  
 " informed



“ informed them the Parliament would  
 “ meet sometime in November.”

FROM this it plainly appeared, that the Directors had dared to make tools of very respectable names, for purposes, which confidence alone in the present administration had been able in some degree to defeat.

THE Directors next ordered to be read several paragraphs of a letter from Lord Clive, and the secret committee, setting forth the happy situation of our affairs abroad, immense treasures flowing into the coffers of the Company, peace restored, trade extended beyond all former dealings, debts recovered from the Nabob, which not long ago were held to be desperate, and in short, such a prospect opened to the Company, as the most sanguine Proprietor had never dared to picture to himself. The reading of this letter, so full a confirmation of what the Proprietors had always advanced, and so much in justification of their present demands, induced them to think that the Directors intended to be before them, and to declare an augmentation themselves, until Mr. Chairman, after this display of our prosperous state, rose up, and declared, with *consistency* and *truth*, “ That the Directors were *unani-*  
 “ *mously* of opinion, that they were not  
 “ in

“ in a condition *yet* to think any augmentation *prudent*.”

IF I may interrupt the thread of this narrative, to give my own comment on this short but pithy speech, I would beg Mr. Chairman to add my opinion to the *unanimous twenty-four*; for till such time as the Directors accomplish their ends, and ingross the bulk of the stock to themselves, at an under-rate, I agree, that they are not yet in a *condition* to think any augmentation *prudent*.”

BUT to pursue my narrative, this strange declaration alarmed the Proprietors; they now saw clearly that the Directors were pre-determined, in spite of reason, in spite of truth, and even against the spirit of their own advices, which they had just ordered to be read, to depreciate the Company's affairs, and deny to the Proprietors the share of the profits which they had a right to expect; a gentleman then got up, and with candour, perspicuity, and great intelligence of the subject, expatiated on the advantages of the Company, showed the prodigious ascendant we had acquired in the commerce of India, enjoying a free and extensive trade, disincumbered of the expence of wars and fortifications to maintain it, which the revenues acquired now amply defrayed, and even a considerable balance  
over,

over, our debts in India extinguished, and effects at home sufficient to answer all our demands; and therefore concluded with a motion, that the dividend for the next half-year, commencing at Christmas, and ending at Midsummer, should be increased from three to five *per cent*; or in other words, that the dividend should be raised to the rate of ten *per cent. per annum*. To this it was replied, by the Deputy-Chairman, that it was true the Company had immense riches in reversion; but intreated the Proprietors to have patience till the Directors should think fit to allow them a share; that it must come; it would come; it should come; and that nothing could prevent its coming; but that many very distressing circumstances had happened of late to the Company; that more and richer cargoes had come home from China than were ever known in one year, which required great sums to be paid for freight, demurrage, and duties; that there were more teas, and other commodities, in their warehouses than it would be prudent to bring at once to market; that there were bills drawn from Bombay to the amount of 129,000 *l.*; that he had made a very exact calculation of the demands which must be answered, and the monies which would be received, before June next, and found

found that the receipts must fall short of the disbursements; and that although the Company's credit was very great, he did not think himself justifiable in borrowing money to divide among ourselves.——No sooner had Mr. Deputy finished his lamentable ditty, than an honourable gentleman, of more loquacity than argument, who has long assumed the privilege of tiring the Court, rose up in support of his friend, and with admirable tautology, enforced all that the other had said: He said would have intimidated the Court with the name of Administration, and the Authority of Parliament: He talked in a confused manner of the melancholy state of the affairs some years ago, depreciated the present, and endeavoured to intimidate for the future. But I will not attempt to give an abstract of his arguments: for it requires a head constructed like his own to retain what none but himself is capable to express.

To all these far-fetched and fallacious arguments of the Directors, was answered simply, That seeing the immense wealth of the Company was acknowledged on all hands, there could be no reason for delaying the augmentation of dividend; that such a delay would only give an opportunity to the rich of taking advantage of the necessitous,

or



or to *foreigners* of buying in at our expence, particularly the Dutch, who had money at command; that nothing but an increase of dividend could fix the value of stock to some settled price, and put an end to that jobbing which was so pernicious both to individuals and the state; that as to the *distressing circumstances* which the Deputy-Chairman had enlarged so much upon, he would find it very difficult, with all his rhetorick, to persuade the Proprietors that rich cargoes from China, and immense wealth in their warehouses, was any great subject of distress; that the extraordinary amount of freights and duties which they had this year to pay was a proof of the extension of their trade, which must redound greatly to their advantage, as well as the increase of the revenues of the state; that the bills drawn from Bombay this year were trifling in comparison of the bills drawn from India in former times, and even these owing to a mistake; for it was intended to defray the expences of all the other settlements from the treasury of Bengal, and money was actually appropriated there for that use, where, not being called for by the draughts being made on London, it will remain in good hands at an interest of 8 per cent. to the Company, and next year be sent home in goods, with an additional



tional profit ; that calculations of the Company's affairs, made up only till June next, was false and deceptive, because in the months of July and August we are reasonably to expect three millions and a half more of effects from India ; but that it was absurd to talk of paying off all their trifling debts before the grant of dividend to the Proprietors ; that they have a right, with effects on hand more than equivalent to all demands made against them, to enjoy the intermediate profits they acquire, as is constantly practised by every prudent man concerned in private trade ; that even if it were necessary, the Company might borrow, at a low interest, any sum sufficient to discharge these debts, and allow the Proprietors the dividend they ask ; that this is not borrowing money to divide among ourselves, but only what every private merchant does, living upon our gains, and borrowing money to extend our trade.

THESE and many more arguments, urged home with a clearness and force which I am incapable of intimating, so hampered the Directors, that they could not tell what to reply, till the Chairman cried out peevishly, *I do say*, that the Company has not assets. The deputy seemed much surprized and disconcerted at this declaration, made with more haste than prudence, and it was immediately

mediately taken up with spirit by a Gentleman who had the Company's welfare too much at heart to let this pass unnoticed. He said the Chairman struck directly at the credit of the Company. That so public a declaration would infallibly sink the value of stock to nothing: that if we had *not assets* we were then bankrupts, and he advised appointing a committee directly to enquire into our affairs, and lay them honestly before the world. Upon this the Chairman rose again, trembling, and in the greatest confusion, and said he only spoke as to *assets* at home, and offered afterwards to produce an estimate of them; but as to the effects abroad, he fairly confessed he had made no calculation about them.

THE Directors must have entertained a very contemptible idea of the understanding of the Proprietors, to pretend to put them off with a partial representation of their affairs, and that taken too from the least advantageous side. Therefore, as they, either from negligence or design, had made out no general estimate for the satisfaction of the Proprietors, it was resolved not to proceed upon so partial and unfair a state of accounts. Upon this a Proprietor, willing to give the Court a satisfaction, which the Directors owned themselves incapable to give, produced very exact calculations of our effects

fects and revenues in India, and of the profits of our trade at home, by which he proved that we were fully enabled to declare a dividend, not only of 10 but of 20 per cent. and concluded with observing, that the word Parliament could not be used with any propriety in this debate ; that no power on earth has a right to dictate or judge for Parliament ; or in other words, the King, Lords, and Commons of Great Britain, would do no injustice with their eyes open. At this time it was also declared, that notwithstanding the insinuations to the prejudice of the Company's credit, there was a Gentleman there in the House willing to advance a million within a month, to support the credit of the Company, and prevent their goods from being hurried to a glutted market, which otherwise would in a short time produce thrice the sum.

THE Directors thus foiled in all their arguments were obliged to fly to the paltry resource of staving off the decision for a few days, by getting one of their friends to propose a ballot, and after much trouble got nine Proprietors to sign the request. In justice to the distinguished merit of one Gentleman who at this time spoke in favour of the Directors, and against the dividend in question, I must not omit to observe, that he was the same who last Court

4

made

made the motion for the dividend, when the Company had three millions less of effects in England, and half a year's revenue less in Bengal, than they have now. His inconsistency shocked the Proprietors, and at length, sensible himself of his own absurdity, he sat down in a confusion obvious to every body.

THUS I have attempted to give a summary of the proceedings of that important day, and shall defer my own remarks thereupon to a future occasion. The Proprietors of the India Company have established, in some degree, the value of their stock, upon the clearest evidence, and have shown the world that they are not to be bullied out of their rights, nor gulled out of their property by their own servants; a proper lesson to all those who, under the specious name of Directors, arrogate to themselves the sole power of disposing of the wealth, profits, and emoluments of the respective Companies with whose affairs they are blindly entrusted.

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THE  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER VIII.

WEDNESDAY, *October* 8, 1766.

NOTHING can redound more to the honour of the Proprietors of East India stock, and the cause which they espouse, than the moderation with which they used their victory over the Directors. After detecting all their arts, and exposing their mismanagement, they contented themselves with establishing their own property upon the most moderate footing which they had a right to require from the present state of the Company's affairs. People did indeed expect that the Directors would have been immediately called to account for their past misconduct ; but every thing was at this time sacrificed for the sake of peace, that no intestine broils might weaken the defence that we shall soon, in all probability, be obliged to make, in support of our privileges. The Directors, foiled in all their arguments, not a single plea to be urged in their behalf, and not one man in their party capable to speak for them, saw themselves, in the second



cond court, at the mercy of the Proprietors. It was then that consideration for the public weal, more than tenderness for them, stepped in to save them. The Proprietors waved all their motions. The first court was the victory of justice; the last was the triumph of moderation.

It is true that on Thursday last, although the majority was clearly three to two on the side of the Proprietors, the Directors had mustered a stronger posse than they had exhibited the Thursday before; and people are at a loss to guess how so many men could be brought to act so diametrically opposite to their own interests, and so manifestly to the general prejudice of the Company. I do not pretend to be an adept in the art and mystery of Directorship, but I think I can throw out some lights to help to account for this strange phenomenon.

My reader must know, that for the happiness of these kingdoms, there exists in this metropolis five great companies, where twenty millions of property are left entirely at the disposal of Directors, whose sole attention is to preserve their own power, and frustrate every attempt of Proprietors to shake off the yoke. There subsists, therefore, between these Directors, a constant alliance, *offensive* and *defensive*, against their constituents, by which, in case of an attack;

each party is obliged to assist the *league*; not by contingents, like German princes, which are never furnished, but *totis viribus*, with their whole strength, like the Swiss Cantons; and this obligation is ever most religiously complied with.

The South Sea Company sends - 24

The London Assurance - - 24

The Royal Exchange Assurance - 24

The Bank - - - 24

And our own worthy Direction,

though last, not least, - - 24

Composing in all an army of 120 trusty troops, who, upon the first alarm that the *craft is in danger*, repair to the standard, and with one voice cry out for their great *Diana of the Ephesians*.

BUT our Directors, besides these alliances with these independent powers, maintain also a standing army, who are hired into the service, and may be properly stiled the *household troops* of our most *gracious sovereigns*. These are composed of clerks, dependents, brokers, weavers, dyers, ships-husbands; and even the worshipful Society of Packers *make up* forty-five, as their quota of this militia. It is said that in former times the strength of the house went only to 200 votes; but the present Directors, by their *superior skill* in bargain making, have increased it to 300. Thus fenced in with alliances,

alliances, and guarded on all sides by faithful myrmidons, they affect to laugh at all attacks from their constituents; and yet we see, when the real interests of the Company are at stake, and the mismanagement gross and palpable, as in the late case, the Proprietors will unite, and overthrow them and their mercenary bands.

ONE resource that the Proprietors in former times had always left against undue influence, was moving for a *ballot*, upon any question of importance.

THIS method gave opportunity to every man to follow his own opinion, without incurring the displeasure of the Directors. Even their own tradesmen, on such an occasion, would often vote according to their own conscience, when they were sure to lose nothing by it. To remedy this dangerous evil, the Directors have hit upon a lucky expedient, and, it is said, practised it with great success in the last ballot, they now require all their dependents, who would find favour in their sight, to deliver in their papers open. By this means all desertion is prevented, and their tradesmen stand by them, overawed as much on a ballot as on a division. To what poor shifts are not men reduced, when they depart from the plain road of truth and candour!

AND yet, in spite of all this influence, and these undue practices, the Proprietors carried the augmentation of the dividend to 10 per cent. by a majority of near three to two, upon a ballot. It is not to be doubted, that the Directors, upon a future occasion, will endeavour to muster the same formidable corps of dependents, to support their cause; but they may be assured this measure will be objected to, and stopt of course.

THE endeavours of the faction, united with the Directors, to depreciate and keep down the value of stock, did not cease with the declaration of the dividend; vanquished in the field, they continue to plot in the cabinet. The true value of stock after the rate of 10 per cent. yearly interest divided upon it, independent of all future prospects, ought to be near 260; but the great Companies, and monied people who are friends to the Directors, keep up from purchasing, that they may force the present Proprietors to part with their stock at an under-value, and in fact, those who have been obliged to sell, have fallen a prey to this stratagem: but I intreat my fellow Proprietors not to be rash in giving away their property; let them consider the great riches the Company has acquired, and the prodigious extension of their lucrative and unrivalled commerce, as I have displayed them in the course of these papers, which



which the Directors themselves were forced to acknowledge. Let them reflect on the present advantage they enjoy by the dividend of 10 per cent. and let them not hastily part with a stock of so much intrinsic worth, yielding so considerable a present interest, and so promising in its future appearance; let them strain every nerve to support its credit, and not let the whole profits of the Company center in the pockets of a few men, who after declaring, these profits must come—they would come—they should come, and that nothing should prevent their coming, would fain have them to come only for themselves and their own adherents.

BUT I hope every man, who has it in his power, will endeavour to come in for a share; and I will further venture to say, that any man, even the most sanguine for assuming the revenues of Indostan to the government, in spite of all charters, may be certain of gaining 100 per cent. to himself in a short time by a purchase of stock; and he will at the same time do a real service to his country, by rescuing the stock out of the hands of foreigners, who otherwise cannot be prevented from coming in with the Directors for a share of the plunder, which surely these gentlemen never intended them. I will do them the justice to believe that it was for their own



behoof alone that their bubble was first blown up.

IN the present flourishing condition of the English East India Company, nothing but the most glaring mismanagement can prevent us from reaping a benefit from our trade superior to all other nations; we have Bengal at our feet, and the great continent of India almost intirely in our own hands. In China we acquire an ascendant every day from our great command of cash and extensive purchases; what then can prevent us from dividing equal to the other Companies, who trade with a trifling capital, and with half our advantages? The Dane, the Swede, as well as the cautious Hollander, draw at least 20 per cent. on their capital; and indeed it would be a strange thing, and totally discouraging to commerce in general, could not the merchant adventurer expect to reap that benefit from the boldest voyage and most distant traffick in the universe.

I WILL therefore pronounce that there is a moral certainty of being able to divide 15 per cent. soon upon our stock; and if arising from our commerce alone, with all the advantages we possess, and no expence of establishments abroad, we cannot yield that profit to our Proprietors, the East India trade is not worth the carrying on.

IN

IN another paper I shall discuss at large the subject of the East-India trade in general; and shew its advantage to this nation in particular; but to conclude this, shall shew some attention to my correspondents, whom perhaps I have too long neglected.

IN my second number I threw in rather crudely some letters which had just come to hand: I was then busy arranging and digesting the accounts which I afterwards exhibited to the public; and the last papers have been taken up by the deductions I drew from these.

A CORRESPONDENT, who proposed calling a previous meeting, was surely too late in his proposal, but we shall be very glad to hear further from him, according to his promise.

ANOTHER, who conveys to us information of two very gross and palpable *mismanagements*, must sign his name before we insert his letter.

SELF-INTEREST has appeared in part in the public papers.

WE are much obliged to a correspondent who has sent us hints upon a great many points relative to India affairs, and shall not fail to avail ourselves of them as occasion requires.

WE have received a long letter signed an impartial Proprietor, containing nothing more

more than a summary of what has been said in our *Examiners*. When this correspondent offers any thing new, we shall be glad to insert it.

WE are much obliged to our military correspondent for the letter which we here insert.

MR. EXAMINER,

S I R,

I HAVE read your paper with great attention, and I believe that no public paper was ever wrote with more candour, truth, and judgment. However, I see many people who have fears of the duration of our prosperity in India, and that it may change by revolution or the attack of some European power. In answer to these fears I shall give you my opinion. We have had war in those countries for these ten years, and we see that one regiment of 700 Europeans, was never beat by 100,000 or a million of Indians, who have always acted uniformly from the earliest times down to the present day; there are instances of great courage in particular men, something like the courage of despair; but none of their armies ever gained a victory, except against one another.

BESIDES, we are now masters of Bengal, strong by its situation, and a chain of moun-

tains ; and we have seapoys and numbers of its inhabitants in our pay, who serve with the same attachment and fidelity that the Swiss do in Europe.

WE have likewise better fortifications there than in any part belonging to the crown of Great Britain.

FROM all these reasons, and many others which I could bring to support my opinion, it appears evident, that not only our islands in the West Indies, but even the kingdom of Ireland, is exposed to more danger, and is more subject to be conquered, than the kingdom of Bengal.

S I R,

Your most humble servant,

AN OFFICER, who served in India.

T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER IX.

SATURDAY, *October 25, 1766.*

**I**N my last Number I endeavoured to explain the influence, and expose the confederacy, by which our Directors expect to maintain themselves in power, in spite of the efforts of the Proprietors; it may not, on this occasion, be thought improper to speak of the nature of split votes, a weapon which has been employed equally on all sides. But as this is a subject that admits of some discussion, before we decide, let us proceed with candor to examine the effects of that practice.

It is a fundamental principle in society, that power should follow property; and in our political constitution it evidently has great weight and influence. If this maxim be right, as to the constitution, with how much more propriety may it be applied to the affairs of a trading Company, where every  
man



man is immediately and directly gainer or loser, in proportion to the stock he holds. It is absurd to say, that a man of 20,000 l. East India stock will not be more anxious for the prosperity of the Company, than he who only holds 500l. Every man who sees his own interest will infallibly pursue it; and when difference of opinion does arise upon measures proper to be followed for the public good, the lesser interest should in common justice give way to that which risks most upon the event. That this is the spirit and intention of our constitutions in the East India Company, is manifest from the charters; and the oath of qualification seems clearly designed to exclude only guardians and trustees, who have no real property of their own at stake; from counteracting those who have. But however different mens opinions may be, as to the meaning of the oath of qualification, I cannot apprehend any danger to the Company, from a practice which only gives a right to every man to decide upon the general concern, in proportion as he is interested in it himself; and in fact, in proportion as he is raised above all influence of Directors or their friends. When any question of real import to the interests of the Company is in agitation, we may be assured the great Proprietors will adopt that side, which appears to them most conducive to the general good, in which they are so deeply involved; to split  
against

against themselves, would be like Mr. Bayes's confused fisherman; Prince Volscius hired him to kill Prince Volscius. The late question of the dividend is decisive upon what I say; notwithstanding the Directors have many friends, who formerly split to bring them in as a matter of mere favour, and of no material consequence to the Company, yet on this occasion they left them alone with their mercenary dependents, to fight it out against the whole body of Proprietors; and I will venture to prophesy for April next, the mismanagement of the present set being now so manifest, that they must once more trust to their *household Troops*; for no independent, uninfluenced voter will ever dream of trusting his property any longer in so weak, and so universally acknowledged incapable hands.

THE great evil which the Proprietors complain of, the unbounded and unrestrained influence of the Directors over the tradesmen and servants of the Company. I do not find fault that any man who possesses five times my stock should have five voices for my one in our deliberations; but I cry out against the injustice of permitting the dependants of the Direction, who have a bare qualification; upon which the dividend is a paltry consideration, in comparison of the profits they receive by their dealings with the Company, to give laws to the real Proprietors, and decide  
upon

Upon the interests of the very men, with whose money they are in a manner bribed to act against them.

THIS evil I hope to see one day redressed, and an Act passed to prevent any tradesman who supplies the Company, or servant who is dependant on the favour of the Directors, from voting in our general courts. This regulation, however salutary, need never be expected to proceed from men, whose views are alone directed to grasping of power in their own hands, and who, while they aim their blows with fury at the present *Directors*, would be sorry, in the smallest degree, to lessen the influence of *Direction*.

As to splitting of votes, if ever that again become an object of Parliamentary deliberation, I hope that wise body will see the necessity of allowing every man a vote in the disposal of his property, in some proportion to the greatness of his concern; and although they may think fit to limit it in its extent, or alter it in the mode, they will never strike at the root of a principle so palpably founded on ideas of reason and natural justice.

THUS having discussed pretty largely the methods pursued by Directors to maintain their own power, I shall next proceed to lay before my fellow Proprietors a remarkable instance of the conduct and management of the present set in discharge of the trust reposed in

in them. If half the zeal, assiduity, and attention, even with the small degree of capacity which they possess, had been bestowed on the affairs of the Company, which they have applied to their own concerns, we should not have now to reproach them with the absurd and distressful situation of the tea trade. But that I may proceed in my usual manner, to state my facts clearly before I attempt to draw deductions from them, I shall first give

An account of Teas remaining in hand unfold, before the arrival of this year's ships from China.

Bohea	5,575,760 lb.	at 2 11	£ 813,131 13 4
Congou	433,300	4 6	97,492 10
Hyson	164,570	11	90,513 10
Pekoe	4,800	6 8	1,600
Singlo	2,018,800	6 4	639,286 13 4
Souchong	94,080	6 6	30,576
			<hr/>
			£ 1,672,600 6 8

Account of Teas received this year in 15 ships from China.

Bohea	6,698,100 lb.	at 2 11	£ 976,806 5
Congou	946,500	4 6	212,962 10
Hyson	97,500	11	53,625
Pekoe	9,500	6 8	3,166 13 4
Singlo	1,699,500	6 4	538,175
Souchong	120,200	6 6	39,065
			<hr/>
			£ 1,823,800 8 4

Add the value of Teas in hand, as above

			<hr/>
			3,496,400 15
Discount $6\frac{1}{2}$ per cent.	—	—	227,266
Total value of Teas now remaining in the Company's warehouse	—	—	<hr/>
			3,269,134 15

By

By these accounts, it appears that there is more than the whole amount of the Company's capital bound up in the article of Tea alone, and now lying perishing in their warehouses; for as this article is managed at present, the annual consumption does not much exceed one million one hundred thousand pounds, as the following state, taken from the last year's sale, will show.

Sales of Tea for 1765, viz.

March	} Sale.	Singlo Tea	63,000lb. at	4	2	£ 13,125		
		Ditto	125,020	4	6	28,129	10	
		Ditto	176,960	4	3	37,604		
		Ditto	34,860	7		12,201		
		Ditto	117,180	7	6	43,942	10	
		Ditto	59,150	8		23,660		
		Hyson Tea	53,800	11		29,590		
		Souchong	59,358	6	6	19,291	7	
		Bohea	2,063,059	3	2½	330,949		11
		Congou	95,765	4	6	21,547	2	6
		Pekoe	4,302	6	8	1,434		
Sept.	} Sale.	Singlo Tea	189,910	4	10	45,894	18	4
		Ditto	42,280	5	6	11,627		
		Ditto	71,820	4	11	17,655	15	
		Ditto	233,590	7		81,756	10	
		Ditto	92,190	8	3	38,028	7	6
		Ditto	76,790	8	6	32,635	15	
		Hyson	64,630	11		35,546	10	
		Souchong	51,669	6	6	16,792	8	6
		Congou	101,464	4		20,292	16	
		Pekoe	3,310	6	10	1,130	18	4
		Bohea	1,953,101	3	3	317,378	18	3
						£ 1,181,213	7	4
Discount 6½ per cent.						76,778	17	
Total, which is as much as can be brought to sale in one year by the present management						1,104,434	10	4



So that, by this state, our annual consumption does not take off above a third part of our stock in hand, while our wise Directors continue to import annually to the value of 600,000 l. more than the demand, do, in fact, form an aggregate fund, that must in time, at their rate of management, not only sink the capital in that commodity, but also every shilling of credit we can obtain. Lest any man doubt that the Directors can be so ignorant or so obstinate as to persist in this obvious mismanagement, I refer him to the number of ships taken up for China both last year and the present; and do further acquaint him, that besides the 200,000 l. remaining in China after loading the last 15 ships, and the large amount of goods sending or already sent from hence, there is actually stated in the accounts from Bengal 24 lacks, or 300,000 l. to be remitted in cash to that country.

THIS is the real state of our China trade, which the Deputy Chairman declared to be distressing beyond measure, and which he said obliged the Directors to borrow considerable sums to carry on. *Distressing* indeed to the Proprietors, if, by the blundering conduct and narrow views of their Managers, they are necessitated to raise sums of money to pay for goods which are thus allowed to rot in their warehouses.

BUT

BUT there are remedies for these evils so simple, that one should think they must have occurred to the Directors, weak as they are, if ever they had turned their thoughts that way: For example, it would be a wise policy to put up to sale a larger quantity of Teas than we are at present accustomed to do, even though they should go at a lower rate, as this would encourage a more general consumption by the cheapness of the commodity, and we should still secure to ourselves a moderate profit on a more considerable quantity, which would be better than extorting an unreasonable gain on a narrow sale, dictated by the paltry spirit of monopoly.

THE next expedient is a natural one, and could not have been overlooked by the present Directors, had they ever thought of the interests of their constituents in their applications to Parliament. But it is remarkable that these Gentlemen have never applied but twice to the legislature, and both times with regard only to the security of their own elections. There is a custom paid on Teas at importation, of 23 l. 18 s.  $7\frac{1}{2}$  d. per cent. value, and this duty is never drawn back upon re-exportation; now this evidently prevents us from coming in competition with the Dutch, &c. in foreign markets, where their commodity is brought to sale unin-

cumbered with such a charge; it would have been an easy matter for our Directors to have obtained a drawback of this custom, as it yields at present a trifling revenue to the state; and the parliament has never been known to refuse such drawbacks when applied for, and often, in the true spirit of commerce, have granted bounties to encourage exportation. I hope the Directors will now take the hint, and apply themselves seriously to have this clog taken off our Tea trade. By this means we shall clear our hands of our dead stock, and soon become the rivals, and perhaps even be enabled to undersel the Dutch, Danes and Swedes in the European markets. One thing too, worthy of our attention, we shall then be able to furnish our own Colonies at as easy a rate as they now purchase it from the Dutch, and smuggle it in upon their wide coasts.

HAD I not made it my constant rule to state plain and clear facts that cannot be controverted, I am persuaded my readers would have given little credit to what I have said, for it is hardly possible to conceive that 24 men could be picked out from the whole human race, to manage the affairs of a great and flourishing company, with so much gross ignorance, misconduct, and neglect.

IF I were to enter into the conduct of particular Directors, how severely could they be made to smart, if they have any feeling remaining; this however I shall delay, in hopes of seeing some amendment in their behaviour, and they may be assured that my labours shall not be wanting for their instruction in the Company's affairs.



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T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER X.

WEDNESDAY, *November 5, 1766.*

**T**HE state of the Tea trade, as given in my last, proves the mismanagement of the Directors in a very strong and incontestable manner. I took no notice of the *September* sale, because it was not then closed; and the small proportion by which it lessens our stock on hand, will soon be counterbalanced by the fresh importation. It is absurd in the Directors to attempt palliating their misconduct, by saying, that they either have applied, or did intend to apply to his Majesty's ministers for a remedy to the evil we complain of. It was their duty to have prevented the evil till such time as they had their remedy prepared: they ought not to have laid out the whole amount of the Company's capital in tea alone, till they were sure that it would not be left to rot in their warehouses. Weak and incapable as the Directors are acknowledged to be, some people



people suspect them of a degree of low cunning in this affair, that is not inconsistent with weakness itself. By thus tying up the Company's funds, they afforded a plausible plea of poverty and distress for refusing an increase of dividend to the Proprietors, till they and their friends should have gradually got possession of the whole stock at an under-rate, and then have become the richest subjects in Great Britain.

It were endless to discant upon the imprudence, negligence, and I may even say injustice of the Directors; but as I would sacrifice every thing for the sake of harmony and unanimity, I shall be willing to bury what is past in oblivion, attentive to what will pass on the 14th of this month, when their candour and disinterestedness, if they possess any, will appear upon a question of the essential interests of the public and the Proprietors. I have no view in my labours but the public good, without rancour or animosity against any man, or any particular set of men. It was indeed necessary, at times, to disclose some disagreeable truths to the public, that they might not be deluded. At present I shall confine myself to explain the great advantages both to the nation and Company, by the motion proposed to be made at the ensuing General Court, which will undoubtedly be carried by the Proprietors,

tors, and also obtain the sanction of Parliament.

It is indeed satisfactory to find that it has already obtained the approbation of several hundred of Proprietors, and that none hardly oppose it but stock-jobbers, who expected to make their fortunes by the fluctuations which otherwise would be inevitable in India stock. Some few may likewise be disappointed, who expected to enrich themselves by the plunder and embezzlement of the Company's territorial revenues in India: But it would be unjust to accuse the Directors, till it is seen whether or not they oppose the measure. It is however certain, that a Director, or any one who expects to be a Director, must be against it, if he consults his own interest preferable to the good of the public and of the Company, its trade, and Proprietors. Any fixed value given to India stock, however great, cannot suit their views; their business is to keep it at a low uncertain value, as we find it at present, while they behind the curtain, knowing the time when they shall raise the dividend 2 per cent. and consequently the stock 50 per cent. more in value, in the mean time always declaring an increase of dividend *premature*, will be able by themselves and their friends with money prepared, to purchase gradually, and imperceptibly,

ceptibly, the bulk of the Company's stock, and then let the cat out of the bag. To a management of this kind, one of the first Dutch houses in this capital owes its rise, and it is suspected that by such another intelligence with the Direction, the same house expect still to increase their immense wealth. At this rate of management, every one of the twenty-four East India Directors would have a more lucrative employment than the first Lord of the Treasury; and as Sir Robert Walpole said of his brother Horace, he will cut up better, even though riches were his principal aim, unless he was connected with the Directors.

FOR stock-jobbers the harvest would be compleat; fears, hopes, and false reports, would raise and sink the value of India stock 40 or 50 per cent. occasionally, rendering it a compleat and perpetual bubble.

BUT in order to discuss the subject properly, let us put down the motion to be made on the 14th; a motion the most wise, judicious, salutary, and patriotic, that ever yet has been proposed in the India house since its first establishment.

## TO THE

*Honourable the* COURT OF DIRECTORS *of*  
*the* UNITED EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Honourable Sirs,

‘ **W**E the underwritten Proprietors of  
‘ East India stock, being duly qua-  
‘ lified, agreeable to the Company’s charter,  
‘ do desire that a General Court of the said  
‘ Company may be called to meet on Friday  
‘ the 14th of November next, to consider  
‘ on empowering You to treat with his Ma-  
‘ jesty’s ministers, about an application to be  
‘ made to Parliament for extending the time  
‘ limited for the expiration of the Com-  
‘ pany’s charter, by a further grant of 37  
‘ years; and for tendering for the use of the  
‘ public, the territorial revenues acquired by  
‘ the Company in the East Indies, after de-  
‘ ducting all expences, both civil and mili-  
‘ tary, of the Company’s settlements, upon  
‘ the Company being allowed the sum of  
‘ 480,000 l. per annum for 10 years certain,  
‘ as a yearly dividend of 15 per cent. to the  
‘ Proprietors on their stock out of the first of  
‘ the revenues, after deducting the expences  
‘ aforesaid, and for inviolably applying the  
‘ profits of the Company’s trade, which  
‘ must be supposed to exceed 600,000 l.  
‘ per



‘ per annum, during the said term of 10  
‘ years, to accumulate to their present  
‘ capital; and for applying the nett profit of  
‘ the Company’s trade, after the said 10  
‘ years, to be divided amongst the Pro-  
‘ prietors; with the proviso, that if the nett  
‘ profits of the Company’s trade should not  
‘ be sufficient to make a dividend of 15 per  
‘ cent. the deficiency to be made up out of  
‘ the revenues. That by obtaining these  
‘ points, both the public and the Company  
‘ may enjoy great, solid, and lasting advan-  
‘ tages, from their acquisitions, which must  
‘ otherwise be a continued scene of rapine,  
‘ plunder, and stock-jobbing, serving only  
‘ to enrich individuals, and bring disorders  
‘ into the Company’s affairs.’

We are, &c. &c.

THIS is the substance of the motion, as we learn by the above letter presented to the Directors on Wednesday last. We will consider it separately, in the two great views in which it presents itself to us, as members of the Commonwealth, and Proprietors of the East India Company.

IN the first place, it is clear from the charters of the Company, particularly by the last in 1757, that they have undoubted rights to their acquisitions in India, either by treaty or conquest; and it would infallibly be determined so in Westminster Hall. But with  
the



the supreme legislative body, it might be taken up in another light. They do not confine themselves to the letter of the law; they consider solely how far the public welfare is involved in their decisions. They may alledge the intention of these charters was not to invest a commercial society, forming a distinct body in the state, with territories and revenues equal to most of the great monarchs in Europe; and these revenues, by our very constitutions, capable of being enjoyed by foreigners. Their meaning goes no farther (they may say) than to allow the Company possessions necessary for the protection and extension of their trade; all beyond that may be justly assumed to the state. On the other hand, Parliament, ever tender of the property of individuals, and cautious of touching in the gentlest manner, the system of public credit, would find itself greatly embarrassed on the occasion. The Proprietors, sensible of this, and willing to conciliate their duty as Englishmen, with their interest as holders of India stock, do freely offer the revenues of Indostan for the public service, upon the just and equitable conditions of repaying 4,800,000 l. the bare expences which they have been at in their fortifications, magazines, and in maintaining the armies in India, by which these very conquests were made; and this sum too to be  
paid

paid only in 10 years, at 10 different payments, out of these very revenues which were their own already by charter. Besides, the sum required is no more than sufficient to enable the Company to carry on its trade to the greatest extent for the good of the nation.

THIS is an acquisition to the state of one million clear the first year, one million and a half the next, and in 10 years above two millions per annum. These revenues, if left intire to the Company, after paying all civil and military establishments in India, would amount, with a moderate accumulation of interest, to between 30 and 40 millions sterling in 14 years time; it is impossible likewise to say, to what extent territorial possession may be carried in India.

By these means the legislature is freed from the disagreeable necessity of acting like the ministers of despotism, who always regulate their measures upon present expediency; a dangerous practice, which may be drawn into an unhappy precedent in a free state like ours, where publick credit is of so much importance, and where the plain meaning of words in any act or charter is considered as sacred and inviolable. However, to this disagreeable necessity they might be driven, were not the Proprietors to adopt this measure, for it is absurd to think that

so

so immense revenues ought to be left to the Company.

I COME now to speak to my fellow Proprietors. Not to enlarge on the advantage of the extension of the charter, which is self-evident; which of you would not be contented with a gain of 150 per cent. in a twelvemonth's time? the avarice of a Vulture Hopkins itself, would be satisfied with it; and yet this is the very profit we hold out to you: The additional dividend of 5 per cent. payable next year, and secured by Parliament, would infallibly render every man's stock worth 150 per cent. more at market, than it is at present. If any Proprietor, after this, can be so absurd as to reject so advantageous a proposal, surely he need expect little pity when he meets a worse. The fixing the real value of stock in this manner, is a capital point in favour of the Proprietors, and as such will, no doubt, be opposed by the whole posse of stock-jobbers. Their game is spoiled by this step; they can no longer play on the hopes and fears of individuals; nor can our Directors now conceal the advantages of the Company, and with immense wealth in their possessions, declare a trifling encrease of 2 per cent. on the dividend to be *premature*; foreigners on this occasion will also renew their confidence in India stock, they will  
now

now see its value fixed and ascertained, independent of artifice and gross mismanagement; they will know what they are to receive, as well as what they give, and will no longer be led by false rumours to fling their property away. The Company will have already acquired two millions before the end of this year, 1766; our trade will be immediately free from the clog of establishments, and military expence, and our clear profits go on accumulating to a capital, sufficient for any commercial purposes. It is difficult to pronounce, if even government was to leave us our territorial revenues complete; if we should be able to put so much as 480,000 l. clear, annually, into the coffers of the Company; it is more probable that it would flow mostly into the pockets of individuals, our factors and servants. Rapine, violence, and lust of gain, might extinguish all fair commercial ideas, and we might become, instead of an honest trading society, a hord of plundering Tartars. A sensible man, well acquainted in India affairs, lately said, that ' he was afraid to put his ' money in that stock at present; that ' knowing the villany of the management ' abroad, and the folly of the management ' at home, he could not think his property ' safe in such hands, and looked upon the ' revenues acquired as an event that would ' turn



‘ turn to the Company’s hurt, and ruin the  
 ‘ trade itself in a very short time.’ Thus  
 no territorial acquisition, let it be ever so  
 great, gives any satisfaction to the Proprietors; it is a certainty of a fixed dividend, and that alone, that gives confidence in the minds of men. But it is in the power of government to restrain the disorders, which we might not be able to prevent; and they may draw a solid and lasting income from those possessions, which would only hamper and perplex private merchants.

SOME have objected to the proviso in the motion. It may be an objection for the Directors, but it is the very thing to be wished by the Proprietors; it becomes a constant check upon the Direction; and I will be bold to say, from my knowledge and long experience in India affairs, that our trade at the end of 10 years, with our accumulated capital properly conducted, must yield 15, nay 20 per cent. profit to the company. It gives greater security to the ignorant, and of course greater value to the stock, and the very proviso, is itself a security that the evil guarded against will never happen. It is also said, that this motion gives too great terms to the publick; and that it is throwing away the Company’s acquisitions. After what has been said, it is only necessary to observe, that this objection comes from the  
 very



very men, who but a month ago, thought so meanly of the Company's affairs, as to refuse a paltry increase of dividend out of the advantages acquired. But whatever arguments may be made use of against the motion, every body may be convinced of one great truth, that the whole difference about India affairs, if this motion can be contested, consists in this single proposition: Is the dividend to be made fixed and certain for a number of years, or is it to remain unfixed and unsettled, and to be raised gradually at the will of the Directors, which, by continual fluctuations, will enrich stock-jobbers, the Directors, and their friends who are in the secret? Some few may have still greater views, by employing their friends abroad, and plundering the territorial revenues of Indostan.

IT has been said, that nothing is more puzzling than to prove a proposition that is self-evident. I find myself in that situation at present, in attempting to demonstrate a thing so clear, as the advantages arising to the Proprietors from the motion proposed to be made. I shall therefore insist no longer on the subject. But for any man, or any body of men, who dare to act in opposition, I will not fail, upon occasion, to unravel the secret folds of their hearts, and display their true motives to the world.

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T H E  
EAST INDIA EXAMINER.  
NUMBER XI.

WEDNESDAY, *November 19, 1766.*

**I**N my last paper I endeavoured to demonstrate the equity and moderation of the motion intended to be made by the Nine Proprietors. Why this motion so reasonable with regard to the public, and so visibly advantageous to the Proprietors, should not have been immediately adopted, is matter of great surprize to many; but to me, who have had occasion to examine pretty closely the different sets of men of which our Company is composed, the surprize is less, and I think, I can clearly account for the effect by carefully investigating the causes which produced it.

THAT the Directors would oppose it I foresaw, they could not act otherwise, in the true spirit of the corps. All Directors look upon Proprietors as their subjects and vassals,  
and

and any proposal coming from them, however salutary, is regarded as little less than high treason against the majesty of the respectable *order*. They immediately take the alarm, and the whole confederacy from the Bank down to the London Assurance, unite their endeavours to oppose so bold and dangerous an innovation. But in this case there are reasons particularly cogent against this attempt of the Proprietors: they had presumed to fix a dividend, which strikes directly both at the power and perquisites of Directorship. While the profits of the Company are left to be dealt out at the discretion of the *honourable board*, you may be sure neither themselves nor their friends are the last helped. When Directors can say to day it is *premature*, but an increase of dividend shall come in good time, it is natural to suppose that they and their friends have the best guess when that day is to come about, and will avail themselves of this fore-knowledge accordingly. That this has been a practice in former times is notorious, and that it will be so again is no less certain if left in their power. The Proprietors therefore, in attempting to retrench this peculiar prerogative of Directorship, must expect to be opposed by every one who bears the name.

THAT the whole herd of stock-jobbers should oppose this motion is most natural, for

it manifestly tends to the destruction of their trade. Should the Proprietors succeed to fix a dividend, there is an end at once to bullying, bearing, making false sales, false purchases, spreading false news, and the whole system of Exchange-alley politicks, which the worthy professors of Jonathan's have put in practice with so much success for these six months past, upon that most excellent subject, the East India stock; to the prejudice of the weak, the absent, and the uninstructed, and to the eternal disgrace of the Directors, who, by concealing the true state of the Company's affairs, gave opportunity for such infamous practices.

BUT this motion has not been supported even by many of the honest uninfluenced Proprietors; and this requires some explanation. The gentlemen who concerted and proposed this motion, saw that government would certainly interfere in our affairs, and endeavour to appropriate the revenues of Bengal, for the use of the public, upon some condition granted to the Company. They therefore thought of a project, equitable on all sides, moderate with regard to the Company, and advantageous to the state; this they proposed, submitting to the consideration of their fellow Proprietors, without making every effort to carry it through, and willing to listen to any other measure that  
should

should be offered. The proposition did really proceed from the same set of men who have all along stood up for the rights and interests of the Company against the Direction, their faction and dependants, and did overthrow the whole strength of that party upon the question of a dividend, and therefore, if every possible effort had been made, must have carried this point also; but it must be acknowledged, that some of the most zealous upon the former question, did oppose this motion. They had entertained high notions (and justly) of the Company's prosperity, and their imaginations set agog upon 30 per cent. to talk only of fifteen seemed like taking one half out of their pockets: many of them have bought into this stock, thus laying out their money upon a plausible appearance of advantage, as every country gentleman does in schemes of improving his lands, and they do not chuse to be curtailed in their prospects of gain, especially too as the Company's right by charter to their acquisitions in India, is clear and indisputable.

THUS the combination of Directors, the clamour of Stock-jobbers, and difference of sentiment among independent Proprietors, and upon these accounts no vigorous exertion on the part of those who were most zealous for the motion, have all contributed to let this motion be lost; yet I am convinced,



although perhaps it may not be credited by many people, that, if the motion had been put to a ballot, as demanded by the nine Proprietors, the majority against it would not have exceeded the others in the proportion of three to two. For my part, I am still of opinion that it was both just and salutary, and a proper medium between the public and the proprietors. Some people who are not concerned in stock think it even too favourable to the East India Company. I cannot be of their opinion. When I admit public good to be more powerful than charters to give a right to parliament to interfere in our acquisitions, I still think it ought to be done with moderation and generosity. As a member of the commonwealth, as well as a partner in India Stock, it appears to me a conciliating proposal equally just and equally beneficial on both sides. A sum of 480,000 l. *per annum* for 10 years, although very considerable, when viewed as a dividend of 15 *per cent.* on the capital, cannot be reckoned an extravagant allowance to the Company out of a revenue of 2 millions yielded up to government. I cannot persuade myself that the present ministry, distinguished for patriotism and love of justice, or that the Earl of Chatham, the asserter of the rights of mankind, the declared enemy of oppression, noble, equitable, and generous

rous in all his measures, would ever counsel violence, or in search of public good, tread private men under foot.

THAT private should yield to public interest is most true, but that any particular set of men should be sacrificed to public utility, when a reasonable compensation can be made, is a principle repugnant both to natural justice and civil liberty. I therefore repose the most intire confidence in the wisdom, justice, and upright intentions of the present administration : I know they will act handsomely by us. The grand object of every honest proprietor is to have his yearly income ascertained, and not left at the mercy of designing Stock-jobbers and blundering Directors. This is what we aspire at, and this, we trust, the generosity of parliament and administration will accomplish for us. Give us what dividend we are in equity entitled to, and let it be fixed ; rescue us and our property from fraud, rapine, and misconduct, and we shall no longer dispute our pretensions with the nation, or begrudge giving up a great deal to secure a certain and peaceable enjoyment of a part.

To some people who do not properly distinguish between the nature of trading stock, and that of a government loan, the rise of a dividend to more than double in a short time, appears strange, and unreasonable ; but

they should consider that there is a wide difference between a certain yearly interest upon a solid and well secured fund, and a dividend of profits upon a trade where both capital and profits are exposed to accidents. The East India Company have experienced the greatest vicissitudes of fortune; they have been on the very brink of bankruptcy, and now are in the height of affluence, credit and solidity. But a few years ago, in the late French war, it was an even chance whether we should have one foot of possession, and one shilling of property left in Bengal, or become absolute masters of the whole country, with more certainty than we hold the sugar islands in the West Indies. The cast of the dice has proved in our favour; and as in the one case we should have lost both stock and dividend, so on the other it is but just we should enjoy a profit in some degree proportioned to our risk. It is absurd to imagine that men could be ever brought to embark their property in a trading company without prospects of this kind.

THE Parliament has an opportunity of seeing and examining the true state of the Company's affairs; and it will be no difficult matter afterwards to fix the dividend for several years to come. If this measure is not adopted, the India-house will become a continual scene of riot, faction, disorder, and intrigue;

trigue ; and the very acquisitions of wealth to the whole body, will be a never-ceasing bone of contention to individuals. Directors will continue to combine secretly, to raise or sink the stock at particular periods, known only to themselves and their friends ; and Proprietors will not surely submit, without a struggle, to such base and injurious combinations. The only way, then, to do justice, and preserve peace, is to put the Company's affairs on such footing as the *nine* Proprietors proposed.

It is strange that an objection should be made to this motion, from the difficulty that might arise from any particular mode of collecting the revenues, or regulating the civil and military powers in India. The Proprietors never meant, nor ever have presumed to prescribe to Parliament upon this article : they leave the mode of collection entirely to the wisdom of that august body. All that they proposed, was to insure to themselves a reasonable, fixed income, without regretting that such immense revenues should come into the coffers of the state, and be applied to ease the national debt, to reduce the taxes, and relieve the oppressed and industrious poor. The Proprietors for the motion are willing that the public should enjoy the greatest share of these advantages ; but the Directors would retain the whole in  
their



their hands, and would amuse Government, and lull to sleep the claims of the nation, by a delusive offer of a part, that probably in a few years would dwindle to nothing, by bad management, and the very form of the constitution of the East India Company, both at home and abroad.

ANOTHER objection is likewise made, from the danger that may arise to the state from putting Bengal into military hands, under the power of the Minister. Little do those who start this objection know of the present state of that country. It is at this moment ruled upon principles of the most frightful despotism. I do not mean to throw the least reflection on the present governor, who will soon be at home to answer for himself; but the powers which were given him are a disgrace to this land of liberty. A parcel of simple merchants have issued out mandates from Leadenhall, that would have hardly come from a Turkish Divan, and have rendered the government of Bengal more absolute than that of the Great Mogul himself. Were these territories in the hands of Government, there could reign no such despotism; the powers would be more equally ballanced. The Company's agents, and the officers of the revenue, independent of one another, would carry on their business under the protection of the military force,



as is practised in our West India colonies; and it is certain that the collectors of the revenue, having more particularly the protection of the ministry at home, would be most respected, and particularly safe from the oppression of the commander of the troops.

As to the danger of throwing too much into the scale of the executive part of government here at home, it is to be observed, that the officers of the revenue must naturally be chosen from the servants of the Company, who have acquired experience in that country; but at any rate, 10,000 l. split into ten different employments at home, gives more influence to the executive power, than would arise from the whole of these offices abroad. But were there danger to be apprehended on that side, it would be still more to be dreaded, when under the management of Directors, who are no less liable to the influence of government, and whose plunder and embezzlements, either of themselves or their servants, would not be under the check of a parliamentary inspection.

THERE is another objection of ignorance, that is hardly worth the trouble to remove. Some people, totally unacquainted with those matters, have taken it into their heads that the revenues have been usually paid in goods. Nothing so false and chimerical: they have been always paid in the coin of  
the

the country ; and in former times, the greatest part was remitted annually to the Great Mogul in a distant country, from whence little returned, and where it was also a practice to bury large sums under ground, which became entirely lost. Besides, it is hard to conceive how the country will be more drained by paying their revenues into the Treasury of England, than into that of the Company in Leadenhall-street, where it must come at last. In both cases, they are equally carried out of the country ; and it is a matter of mere indifference to the inhabitants, whether they pay them to the King of Great Britain, or to the East India Company.

If it is said that the India Company could bring home the revenue in merchandize, whereas the Government would bring it home in coin, the answer is obvious : The Company will unquestionably bring home to Europe, in either case, as great a quantity of merchandize as can possibly be disposed of, and if the revenues are collected for Government, the Company will be glad to receive cash in India to pay for these goods, and will give to the collectors of the revenues draughts on the India House in London for the amount, and the overplus must in both cases be brought home in coin or bullion.

UPON the whole, I would have the Directors to consider that, by rejecting this proposal,

posal, they make themselves responsible for the consequences, and become in a manner bound to the Company to procure them better terms. I shall not judge before-hand any terms which they are to procure for us. I own, indeed, I have no very high idea, either of their inclination or abilities; but I shall examine whatever may come from them with candour, and in my usual way first prove my facts, before I pretend to expose their unworthiness to the world.

It is a most unhappy circumstance for them, that they have not yet been able to disprove any one allegation against them. On the contrary, they have now pleaded guilty in the most unequivocal manner, by their silence upon the only points on which the Proprietors have attacked them, endeavouring to divert the attention of the Public from the subject of their mismanagement to the dispute between them and their servants. By this they may indulge their private resentments, but it is in vain to expect to gloss over their own misdeeds, by attacking the men who have deserved best at the Company's hands. Perhaps too, when they find their conduct at home not defensible, they think to redeem their character, by showing an extraordinary zeal for the good of the Company abroad; perhaps even conscious of the contempt they must have fallen into in

the eyes of Government, they think to regain their confidence, by this display of their wisdom and activity, and thereby also to cloak the violence which they have already committed, and may hereafter commit in that distant corner. The Public know them too well; Government is too well instructed in the affairs of India, to be the dupes of so flimsy an artifice. The disorders in Bengal are great; and one of these very Gentlemen, whose character they presume to attack, lately assured me, from his knowledge of those parts, that from the late great accession of power and territory in India, the state of affairs in that country is now so totally altered, that Bengal must remain the theatre of cruelty, injustice, rapine, and depredation, unless, by the interposition of Government, proper checks are established to controul the despotism which must always prevail \*.

I SHALL take no further notice of the Directors for this day, but conclude my paper, by setting people right, by irrefragable facts, upon a point on which I find many men, especially at the other end of the town, are mistaken. It is a commonly received notion,

\* The government of so immense and distant a country requires to be under the immediate inspection of our government at home, and every part of that rich and populous empire ought to feel the protection of the British laws, which never can happen under the present system.

although



although erroneous, that the rise of India Stock has an effect to lower all the other funds; for, say they, people sell out of these to buy into the other. It is true, that they do; but it is as true that the people, who sell out of India, must buy again into the other funds; besides, it is notorious, that there are vast sums of money scraped together from all quarters that never were in public funds before, and are now employed to purchase India, the price of which must of course be invested immediately in the Government Stocks. Even the Dutch, who were formerly so considerable Proprietors, have now sold out, so that I will venture to say, there never was, since the beginning of the Company, so little Stock in the hands of Foreigners, and their money has been lent to subjects of this kingdom to lay out in India Stock.

WHAT I have said shows clearly, that the effect ought to be the very reverse of what is apprehended: That the rise in India Stock ought to occasion a proportionable rise in all the others; and that this is true, in practice as well as in theory, any man may convince himself, by simply inspecting the prices current for last year. I shall only instance three remarkable periods by way of illustration, and give them on the Consolidated 3 per cent. for brevity's sake. On the



17th April last, about two months before the dividend on the Consolidated,

India Stock was at — —  $165\frac{1}{4}$

3 per Cent. Conf. — —  $89\frac{1}{4}a\frac{1}{3}$

FROM the 20th to the 26th of August, when India Stock was at the highest, and about the same time before the dividend on the 3 per Cent.

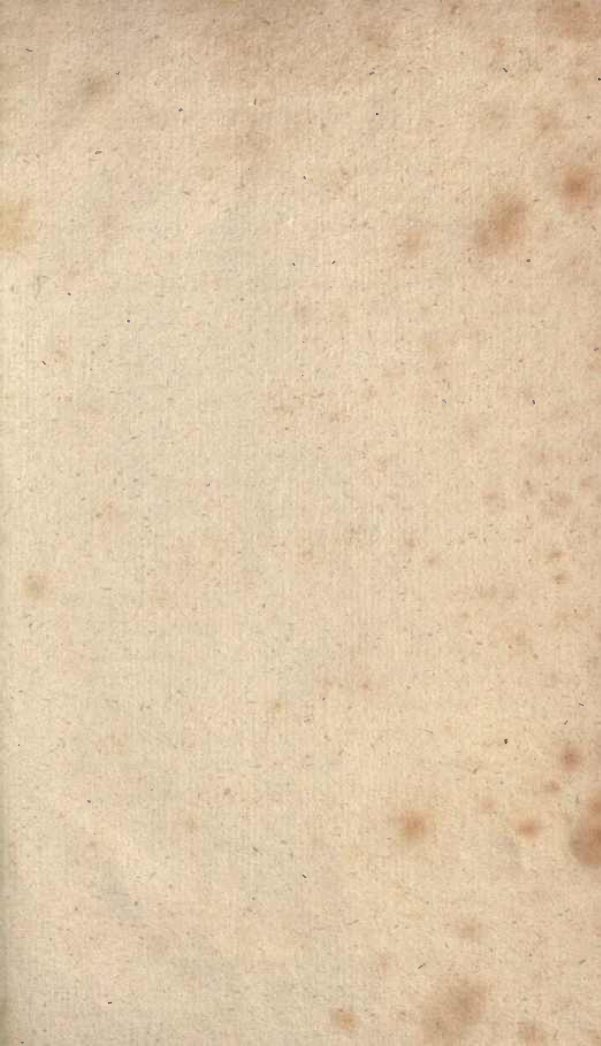
India Stock rose even to — — 230

3 per Cent. Conf. — —  $90\frac{3}{8}$

FROM the beginning of September, when India fell to 210, 207, and 200, the 3 per Cent. fell down with it; and notwithstanding India stock has risen since, the great blow it got continues still to affect the other funds, and amongst the rest the 3 per Cent. Consolidated, although naturally that stock ought to have risen, as the time of paying the dividend drew nearer. The 3 per Cent. Consolidated, November 15th, was only at  $89\frac{2}{8}$ .

It may not be amiss to take notice of what has been industriously spread about, that one of the nine Proprietors, who signed the letter to the Directors, was a Foreigner. This can refer to none but Mr. PUNCHAUD, who is indeed a Banker in Paris, but born a true Cockney in London, and in partnership with Mr. FOLEY, a Gentleman nearly related to a family possessed of one of the gréatest landed estates in England.









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The image shows the front cover and spine of a book. The cover is decorated with a traditional marbled paper pattern, featuring swirling, organic shapes in shades of brown, tan, and cream. The spine is bound in a dark brown, textured material, likely cloth or leatherette. A small, rectangular, light blue sticker is affixed to the lower portion of the spine. The sticker has a decorative, slightly irregular top edge and contains the text 'University Southern Library' in a black, serif font, arranged in three lines.

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